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# ANGLICANISM



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# ANGLICANISM

LECTURES ON THE OLAUS PETRI FOUNDATION

DELIVERED IN UPSALA DURING SEPTEMBER, 1920

BY

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## PREFACE

### I.

THESE lectures were designed with the object of assisting Swedish students to understand the highly perplexing phenomenon which is called Anglicanism, of which the extraordinary character is rarely appreciated even by English Churchmen, and which must needs present an aspect of baffling perplexity to foreigners. I desired to set before my hearers a statement which should give them the right point of view from which to regard the version of Christianity expressed in the law and standards of the Church of England. I invited them to note and weigh the influences by which modern Anglicanism has been shaped and coloured. Apart from the history the subject is wholly unintelligible, and yet it is precisely the history which is commonly ignored, or concealed, or misrepresented. Too often the foreign student, Eastern or Protestant, when he visits England in order to learn on the spot the truth about the National Church, falls a victim to the natural desire of Anglican

partisans of one description or another to impress him with the notion that their own beliefs and practices are properly Anglican. He is passed from one party centre to another, made familiar with the party newspapers, introduced to the party leaders, and familiarized with the party phrases. In these circumstances his chances of gaining a sound knowledge of Anglicanism are slight, and, in point of fact, foreign students rarely understand the Christianity of England.

When, some years ago, I accepted the invitation, conveyed to me by my friend, Archbishop Söderblom, to deliver the Olaus Petri Lectures in Upsala, the outlook, as well ecclesiastical as civil, was very different from that which confronted me in September, 1920, when my undertaking was at last carried out.

In the interval the Great European War had altered the conditions of human life, and changed the points of view from which considering men regarded the creeds and policies of Christendom. The desire for Christian unity, which, before the war, was only felt within the Church of England by eccentric individuals (who too often found themselves on that account exposed to the censures of their fellow-Churchmen), became suddenly the prevailing sentiment. In the Lambeth Conference it dominated the Bishops, and found expression in the well-known

*Appeal to all Christian People*, which, be its merits or demerits what they may, has made an impression on the public mind greater than that of any previous Anglican pronouncement.

Disgust with ecclesiastical divisions has gone along with a profound, if largely irrational, discontent with existing social and economic conditions. The general sentiment has gathered strength from many sources. Mortification at the petty rôle assigned to Christianity in the drama of civilized politics, compunction at the apparent failure of the Churches to discipline and direct the populations of Christendom, an intense and painful realization of the chasm which parts the sentiments, procedures, and ideals of modern war from the morality of the Gospel, a passionate desire at all hazards and at any cost to get into touch with the alienated masses—all these factors have been active and powerful among religious people during the last few years, and their effect is perceptible in all directions. Within the relatively petty world of Anglicanism we have witnessed the rapid growth and complete triumph of anti-national ideas. The Enabling Act of 1919, whatever may have been the intentions of its promoters, was in principle an Act for denationalizing the National Church.

At first sight, indeed, the creation of a "National

Assembly of the Church of England" might have appeared to imply an impressive affirmation of the national idea; and if the Enabling Act had expressed the agreement of English Christians as a whole the appearance would not have been wholly misleading. North of the Tweed, the Established Church, also confronted by the problem of religious division, and acutely conscious of the public discredit which the failure to solve that problem occasions, adopted a wiser procedure.

The difference between the English and Scottish Acts is worth noting. Both, indeed, were notable assertions of "ultramontane" principles, and to that extent were repudiations of national authority in the ecclesiastical sphere; but while the Scottish Act was prepared *with a view to facilitate the union of other Churches with the Church of Scotland*, and expressed a general agreement already secured by protracted negotiations between the two great branches of the Presbyterian Church, the English Enabling Act was only concerned with the "rights" of the Church of England, and had no reference to the non-established Churches, whose members were specifically and for the first time excluded from membership in the National Church. Thus, while the one, in spite of its exorbitant "ultramontanism," may possibly become the instrument



for bringing unity to Scottish Christianity, and restoring a genuinely national character to the Established Church, the other can only deepen and stereotype the division between Anglicans and Nonconformists by transforming the result of an unhappy history into the expression of a religious principle.

When the Enabling Bill was before Parliament, the Archbishops and other advocates of the Bill asserted repeatedly and with vehemence, as if repelling an injurious accusation, that no change in the national character of the Church of England was either designed or would be effected by the measure. But the fact remains that *in principle* the Enabling Act is an Act of Disestablishment. The newly created National Assembly is a merely denominational body, elected (so far as its lay members are concerned) by a fraction of English citizens, and almost confessedly hostile to every feature of the Establishment which implies and secures the authority of the nation in the ecclesiastical sphere. The formation of the electoral rolls in the parishes must have disclosed to the least reflecting advocates of "self-government" the formidable character of the experiment to which they have subjected the National Church. Everywhere the numbers entered on the rolls are surprisingly small, so small as to make the retention of the national character, and

(as some would add) the continued possession of the ancient fabrics and endowments, a highly anomalous circumstance.

If, indeed, the National Assembly had regarded itself as properly charged with the task of facilitating the working of the national system, and had disclosed a jealous concern for the religious rights of the English nation, it might have served the interest of efficiency without introducing any new and incompatible principle into the relations of Church and State. But the brief period of activity which the National Assembly has enjoyed must have sufficed to dissipate expectations of this kind. Whatever else is doubtful about the Assembly, its dislike of the National Establishment is not. Its earliest legislative achievements have been uniformly marked by a keenly denominational intention. In the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Act the disestablishment of the Church in the parishes has been virtually accomplished. The "parson," in the true sense of the venerable term, has been abolished. The parishioners as such have no longer any effective rights in what can no longer be truly described as "the parish church." The churchwardens have ceased to represent the parish. The Church of England is henceforth in the eyes of the law a denomination, distinguished from the other

denominations by the circumstances that its membership has been defined by Parliament, and that it possesses the ancient religious endowments of the nation. If the National Church were formally disestablished, no further change would be requisite in the parishes. Disendowment, of course, is another matter.

This process of denationalizing the National Church has been described as a method for restoring to the English laity the rights which in the course of time they have lost, but the description implies a radical misunderstanding of the method by which the laity have hitherto expressed their will in the Church of England.

That will is expressed in the law, shaped and enacted by the nation itself, which fixes the conditions under which the parish clergyman fulfils his ministry. The rights of the English laity are summed up in the demand that the English law shall be obeyed. The parish clergyman's liberty stands on the same foundation. While he obeys the law, he is, as he ought always to be, free from interference. His pastorate, legally determined in its main activities, is fulfilled responsibly as befits one who holds the office of pastor, teacher, and "parson" within the parish. Unhappily, within recent years, the law has been deliberately broken in many parishes, and the parishioners, justly exasperated, have

been but too easily induced to grasp at the delusive offer of power over the clergyman within the parish exercised not by the law but directly by themselves. The familiar spectacle of the Nonconformist denominations, organized on a voluntary or contractual basis, in which the minister is wholly dependent on his congregation, has no doubt facilitated acceptance of the new proposal. But such local control cannot be reconciled with national establishment as we have known it in England. By setting up in every parish a parochial Church Council, representative, not of the parishioners as a whole, but of that fraction of them which is included in the parochial roll, Parliament has only substituted one grievance for another. For the local clique may be more offensive to the general sentiment, and not less contemptuous of the law, than the local parson. There are besides objections of a grave character, none the less grave for being easily obscured. The lowering of the clergyman's status and the diminution of his authority within the parish are not likely to improve his pastoral quality, and will certainly have an influence in discouraging men of high and independent character from offering themselves for ordination. Yet it is the absence of such men from the ranks of the clergy that, more than any other circum-



stance, weakens the influence of religion in the community and destroys the legitimate prestige of the Church. Nor may it be assumed that the grand object for which so heavy a price has been paid will after all be secured by the new arrangement. The laity under the Parochial Councils Act can only appeal to the Bishop against their law-breaking parson, and the Bishop can only do in the future what he has often done in the past—admonish the clergyman. Why should it be supposed that episcopal authority, which has hitherto been notoriously unable to restrain the illegal practices of clergymen when invoked by “aggrieved parishioners,” will be effective when invoked by the parochial Church Councils? Will not the plea of “Catholic principle” be as valid against the National Assembly as against the Parliament which created it?

## II.

I have thought it worth while to publish these lectures in England because they must needs raise in a considering reader’s mind a question which many circumstances are forcing into view—namely, What will be the future of Anglicanism?

The product of historic conditions which have largely disappeared, dependent in its dis-

tinctive features on forces and factors which are patently failing, confronted by hostile tendencies which are everywhere gaining strength, Anglicanism, it may not unreasonably be thought, is destined to share the fate of that Gallican version of Christianity to which it had some obvious resemblances, and with which from time to time it had interesting relations. Anglicanism was the product of the Reformation, and Gallicanism drew from medieval sources. The resemblances were therefore superficial, and the relations could not be more than occasional and temporary; but the established systems of Christianity, Anglican and Gallican, had this in common, that they were determined by local conditions, and closely bound to national politics. It is, however, very evident that the modern world has little use for local and national versions of universal truths. Christianity is essentially Catholic: civilization is becoming cosmopolitan. It is increasingly difficult to vindicate a conception of Christianity which is national. Nevertheless, Anglicanism might have persisted for a long time, thanks to its practical excellences and to the strength of its roots in English history and sentiment, had it not been for the growth within the Church of England of a movement, Nonjuring in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Tractarian in the nineteenth,

and Anglo-Catholic in the twentieth, which is essentially destructive of Anglican presuppositions and openly contemptuous of Anglican forms and traditions. Nonjurors were extruded by the power of the State, Tractarians were repudiated by the general sentiment of the Church; but the Anglo-Catholics have nothing to fear from the State which has ceased to concern itself with ecclesiastical affairs, and they are succeeding to a remarkable extent in shaping the Church to their own purposes. The Enabling Act may well have placed in their hands the machinery for effecting a transformation of the Church of England. That fatal measure may perhaps be seen in the retrospect of history to register the passing of Anglicanism.

The Anglo-Catholic Movement is marked by enthusiasm; it is admirably organized, and led with intelligence and resolution. That it is gaining ground within the ranks of the clergy cannot be doubted. It appears to have captured the English Church Union, and possesses representatives on the episcopal bench who are energetic, courageous, and popular. Many of its supporters are Socialists of some sort, and, as such, possess an access to the popular mind which is hardly within the reach of more "orthodox" economists. Anglo-Catholicism is strongly established in both the ancient Universi-

ties, and has a strong hold on the theological colleges. It is not improbable that within a few years the movement may become dominant in the Lower Houses of the Convocations, and even (though the presence of the Bishops and the laity as independent "houses" would make this more difficult) in the National Assembly. In view of these considerations it becomes important that English Churchmen should form a just notion of this, the latest, phase of the Tractarian revolt against the established religion of the Church of England. Is it possible to find in Anglo-Catholicism a satisfactory alternative to Anglicanism? Has it any promise of permanence? Is it a logically coherent system of faith and order? Can it be fitted into any ecclesiastical system which could reasonably be expected to gain the acceptance of the mass of English Churchmen? Does it offer any solution of the formidable and multiplying problems which now embarrass the belief of educated Christians? Does it guarantee adequate liberty of thought to perplexed believers, adequate liberty of study to the scholars, adequate liberty of teaching to the clergy?



## III.

The *Report of the First Anglo-Catholic Congress*, London, 1920, published by the S.P.C.K., and the reports of the recent convention of Anglo-Catholic clergy in Oxford, may, perhaps, disclose sufficiently the distinctive beliefs, methods, and objects of the movement.

Essentially, we see, the Anglo-Catholic theory is a revised version of the familiar "Branch theory" of the Tractarians. While, however, the original form of the theory could plead large justification in the language of Anglican divines of the Laudian school, the revised version is altogether unsupported by Anglican authority. In stretching the duration of the undivided Catholic Church from the "first six centuries," or the epoch of the undisputed general councils, to so late a date as A.D. 1054, it is obvious that the whole case for the English Reformation is surrendered, and the work of the English Reformers is wholly disallowed. But even this formidable change does not suffice. The new "Branch theory" is supplemented by an argument from "Christian experience" which serves to authenticate, explicitly or implicitly, the whole current Roman system except the Papal Infallibility and the Papal condemnation of Anglican orders. It is not denied that this teaching is novel. The

Church of England is not yet converted to its acceptance. Thus the Rev. N. P. Williams said frankly:

“ It is, of course, the case that the Catholic movement has not yet succeeded—though we have no doubt that it will ultimately succeed—in what is the chief of its preliminary tasks on the intellectual side—that of convincing all members of the Anglican communion that ‘ primitive Christendom ’ cannot mean anything other than ‘ undivided pre-1054 Christendom. ’ ”\*

The difficulty is, perhaps, even greater than Mr. Williams perceives, for even when he has brought the English Churchman to acquiesce in this violent breach with the tradition of the Church of England, his task is only half performed. The most difficult part of it remains—viz., to demonstrate the value of this new standard of doctrine and discipline for the purposes of a living Church. Putting aside for the moment the deeper questions, and looking only at the practical aspect, can it be maintained that the Anglo-Catholic theory is capable of providing a principle by which effective discipline in the Church of England can be secured? Perhaps a Bishop is disposed to apply this test in the first place because he, beyond other Anglicans, must needs be anxious to discover a remedy

\* Vide *Report*, p. 69.

for the existing disorders which both offend his sense of fitness and trouble his conscience. Is there, then, in the proposal to clothe the whole period up to A.D. 1054 with plenary Catholic authority any real promise of a restoration of discipline? Shall we have at last gained a clear and undisputed rule of Anglican practice? I observe that there has been, apart from the Church of Rome, no authoritative formulation of the precedents which that remote age provides for modern guidance; that there exists no authority outside the Church of Rome save the antiquarian experts to whom the task of formulation can reasonably be entrusted; and that the antiquarian experts have never yet been, and are never likely to be, agreed among themselves.

In the event of a conflict, therefore, between Bishop and Bishop, or Bishop and parish priest, as to the precise content of the "Catholic tradition" in any given case, who is to decide? *Ex hypothesi* no national authority will suffice, and, apart from the Church of Rome, there is no other. The proposal that the disputants should "appeal to a General Council" can hardly be made seriously in view of the indisputable fact that such a council could not possibly be convened. The fact is that an unformulated tradition can never provide a basis for ecclesiastical discipline. Individualism is none the less anarchic

because it decks out its procedures with the solemn phraseology of Catholic usage and Divine right.

Even if *per impossibile* there could be effected a working agreement between Bishops and clergy as to the contents of the "Catholic tradition," there would still remain many matters, confessedly posterior in origin to A.D. 1054, and therefore not truly "Catholic," which are passionately advocated by many Anglo-Catholics, and justified on the ground that "Christian experience" within the Roman Church has demonstrated their spiritual value.

The Anglo-Catholic Movement is confessedly Romanizing. One great advantage of recognizing the authority of the Catholic Church up to A.D. 1054 as binding on Anglicans is, we are told, that it permits—nay, requires—an attitude of sympathy, even of receptivity, towards everything Roman. The traditional Anglican position towards the Church of Rome is described in terms of indignant repudiation. Thus the Chaplain of Liddon House, London, said at the Anglo-Catholic Conference:

"With a clear apprehension of our own Catholic status, a clear standard of reference for our own beliefs and practices, we could escape from a situation almost unbearably absurd—a situation in which Anglicans can blink such obvious facts as that we owe almost everything



in our ecclesiastical organization, our theological system, and our liturgical forms, to the only Apostolic See in Europe—a See with which it is frankly anomalous that we should not be in communion. Do we not long for the day when loyalty to the English Church need no longer be identified with an antiquarian preoccupation with ‘Celtic Christianity,’ or even with the second year of King Edward VI.? Do we not long for the day when we can get rid of a provincialism which has perhaps been inevitable, but is essentially pedantic, and admit quite freely that it is no condemnation of any Christian custom to say that it is based on the experience of a Church which has made the Faith natural and lovable to millions of simple and saintly people, which has an unrivalled practical knowledge of the human heart, and to whose unwavering fidelity and devotion the continued supremacy of the Mass in Western Christendom is directly due? ”\*

This attitude of mind, at once admiring and self-depreciatory, has, of course, facilitated the adoption of non-Catholic (*i.e.*, *post-1054*) Roman practices, and such adoption has been defended by the appeal to Christian experience. With less candour than adroitness the attempt is made to turn a familiar Protestant argument into a plea for Romanizing. Thus the Principal of St. Stephen’s House, Oxford, writes:

“It is not sufficiently realized that opposition to the cultus of the Reserved Sacrament is inconsistent with

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\* Vide *Report*, p. 116.



the claim so widely urged that English Churchmen must in nowise limit their outlook to specifically Anglican religious experience. We are constantly told that we must be prepared to recognize the workings of the Holy Spirit in the devotional developments of Protestant nonconformity. . . . But ours is a wider outlook.

“We claim an ungrudging and unequivocal recognition for the whole of Christian experience—for the infinitely greater part—for the Catholic part—as well as for those more recent and partial developments which date from the sixteenth century.”\*

It will not have escaped the reader's notice that this writer has subtly confused two distinct and properly unrelated factors—the universal duty to be charitable in judging the devotional practices of other Christians, and the right of an English Churchman to substitute Roman doctrines and devotional practices for those of the Church of England. No Protestant Anglican has ever claimed that his belief in the spiritual value of non-Anglican methods of worship could justify him in substituting such methods for those prescribed by the law of the Church of England. His judgment of other religious methods is rightly affected by the proofs of their spiritual value which the experience of those who use them seems to provide, and his language in discussing them becomes on that account more

\* Vide *Report*, p. 141.

respectful and more charitable; but he never supposes that his personal obligation to adopt the methods of his own Church is thereby in the smallest degree diminished. The Anglo-Catholic acts on the supposition that his own belief in the spiritual excellence of modern Roman devotions is sufficient to cancel the law of the Church of England, to release the English clergyman from the subscriptions which condition his tenure of office and emolument, and implicitly to disallow and contradict the established doctrine. This surely cannot be harmonized with any Catholic principle. Rather is it properly to be designated as the merest individualism, crude, naked, anarchic, and unabashed.

If I understand their public declarations rightly, the Anglo-Catholics hope to Romanize the Church of England so effectually, that the whole difference between the Anglican and the Roman version of Christianity will be narrowed down to the two points—the Pope's infallibility and the validity of Anglican ordinations. These points, however, they do not despair of removing, for the first, they think, might be dealt with by further explanations of the Vatican decree, and the last by the "conditional ordination" of the Anglican clergy. Then at last the long-continued feud will have been ended, and the united Churches may raise to Heaven the victorious

hymn, *Te Deum Laudamus*. It is this hope of reunion with the Roman Mother that justifies to the consciences of the Anglo-Catholic clergy their continuance within the Anglican Communion, their formal acceptance of the Anglican standards, and their use, albeit partial, of the Anglican formularies. They think that as English clergymen they can the more effectually guide the English laity out of their hereditary Protestantism, and bring them into agreement with the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome. They are setting out on the great task of "converting" England to "Catholicism" with the ardour of crusaders and the buoyant confidence of visionaries. The Dean of King's College, Cambridge, indeed, utters a note of caution to his colleagues:

"We must realize," he says, "that the main obstacles to reunion with Rome, *which we can deal with*, and which we are meant to deal with, *lie within our own body*. It is of first importance *to unify our own communion, on a demonstrably Catholic basis, however simple and unelaborate*. Is it not just to say that lately we Catholics have been rushing ahead so fast on the way of outward likeness to Rome that, without rendering English Catholicity one whit more intelligible or attractive to the Romans, we have run a perilous risk of rendering it utterly unintelligible to other sections of our own communion? This is to defeat our dearest ends. Religious outlook will not be rushed; at quickest, it changes with changing

generations. Only patience succeeds here; for patience is loving and persuades, and provokes no reaction. There must always be diversity within the Church of England. Our work is to render the diversity one *within Catholicism* instead of letting it decline to one between Protestant and Catholic.”\*

This is plain speaking, and cannot be misunderstood. The “conversion” of England by the Anglo-Catholics is to be effected in two stages. First, the Church of England is to be purged of Protestantism; and, next, the purified Church is to be reunited to its Roman Mother, from whom indeed it will no longer differ in any matter of substance. The missionaries are persuaded that the flowing tide is with them and that their triumph is certain and near; much has been already gained; the goal is even now in sight:

“The very Faith we are fighting for is being taught by thousands of our parish priests and lived by thousands of their faithful people. To say that the English nation has no mind for a Church in which they find the Catholic status and setting of the Mass, the Catholic ministry of Penance, an eager honouring of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament, an expressed devotion to the Mother of God and all His Saints: to say that they have no mind for the atmosphere of sacramental life and the thrilling sense of corporate devotion—to say all this is not a foolish extravagance, it is a plain and obvious falsehood. . . .

“All over the country there is the cry to-day for the

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\* Vide *Report*, p. 95.



Catholic Faith and the Catholic system; not for little bits of it, not for a few fragments tacked on experimentally to some new religion, but for the thing itself—the whole thing and nothing but the thing.”\*

There is no secret about the objective, no concealment of the method, no doubt about the enthusiasm. Everything Anglican *must* on the Anglo-Catholic theory be understood in a “Catholic” sense, and everything “Catholic” *must* be understood in a Roman sense, for Rome is beyond all question “Catholic,” and “Catholicism” is always and everywhere the same! Against these assumptions nothing can be allowed a hearing. Law, history, standards, subscriptions, canons, episcopal authority—all alike lose force and meaning. The Anglo-Catholic is free of them all. I cannot find in the history of the Church of England any parallel to the paradox presented by the Anglo-Catholic Movement. How far is the movement likely to succeed? If it succeeded, and by its success the Roman version of Christianity came again to prevail in England, would the nation gain or lose? What would be the effect of the disappearance of the Church of England by absorption into the Church of Rome upon the object of so many prayers and hopes—the reunion of English-speaking Christians?

\* Vide *Report*, p. 122.



## IV.

It is not necessary to think meanly or to speak bitterly of the Church of Rome in order to believe that the extension of its influence in England would be unfavourable to the best interests of the nation, and that the restoration of its ancient supremacy would be a grave spiritual disaster. No educated man can be wholly ignorant of the great though deeply shadowed history of the Papacy; no thoughtful Christian of any description will be little or deny the contributions of Roman Christianity to the moral and intellectual inheritance of the modern world. Few informed or considering men will be disposed to doubt that both within Christendom and beyond its frontiers the Church of Rome is rendering, and is destined to render, notable services to mankind.

Nevertheless, the Roman version of Christ's religion is, I must needs think, inadequate to the needs of the modern world, and the incapacity of the Roman Church for effective self-reformation, disastrously proved at the Councils of Trent and the Vatican, must disqualify it ever more plainly for the spiritual leadership of free and civilized peoples. It retains its hold, indeed, but only over the most backward communities (*e.g.*, the Irish, the French-Canadians, the

Southern Italians), and the most unlettered sections of the greater peoples, by lowering its standards of faith and morals until they are clearly inferior to those of the best representatives of the non-Christian world. The moral obtuseness of the devout peasantry of Ireland and the easy acquiescence therein of the Irish hierarchy, are facts equally melancholy, suggestive, and humiliating.

The Mass and the Confessional, which are the essential features of Anglo-Catholic as of Roman Christianity, tend to create a devout but dependent type of Christian, emotional rather than intelligent, easily roused to fanatical enthusiasm, but ill-fitted for responsible citizenship. I say "the Mass and the Confessional" advisedly, for these are the really important matters which involve a specific conception of the Christian religion—namely, that specific conception which was rejected by the Reformed Churches in the sixteenth century, and replaced by what the Reformers conceived to be a truer conception. History has bequeathed to us these two conceptions of the Divine Revelation, and they disclose their distinctiveness most evidently in relation to the position assigned to the Ministry within the Church.

"The Protestant religion" is the historical description of the revised version of traditional

Christianity which the Church of England, in common with the other Reformed Churches, did unquestionably accept, and does assuredly set out in its standards and formularies. That version was patient of many differences in detail: it was consistent with many forms of ecclesiastical polity; it could express itself through various modes of worship; but its essential identity lay in the conviction, however formulated, that the old legal conception of religion with its "sacrificing priests," saving formulae, and mechanical disciplines was "done away in Christ." The Reformers were men of their own age; its distinctive errors shadowed their minds, and led them often astray. Time has disallowed and destroyed much of their work, much that they swept away in the vehemence of a great reaction has silently reclaimed its hold on men's hearts, much that they passionately denounced has recovered its credit in men's regard; but on the main issue of the Reformation we stand where they stood. The political conditions which once drew to their side the whole volume of English patriotism have changed; and in a secularist epoch religion itself, which to them seemed of paramount importance, falls out of the main stream of popular interest, and is likely to appear tiresome, petty, and irrelevant. None the less the issue is momentous. For

English Churchmen it has now become crucial and pressing. We have to thank the Anglo-Catholics for setting it before us in clear-cut distinctness. Which of the historic versions of the Christian religion shall the Anglican Communion maintain? Shall it continue to profess "the Protestant religion"? or shall it go back on the witness of nearly four centuries, repudiate the Reformation, and accept at the hands of its own Anglo-Catholics that medieval version of Christianity which has persisted in the Roman Church in a purified form?

## V.

It is, however, often asserted and very generally assumed in modern discussions that the grand controversy of the Reformation is now really exhausted, and that the old conflict of first principles which rent Western Christendom in twain, and filled so many sombre and terrible pages of modern history, has at last burnt itself out. Protestants and Catholics have ceased to persecute one another, and learned to regard one another's religious systems with tolerance, and even with sympathy. Surely there can no longer exist any adequate reason for the continued separation of the Churches. Let me observe in passing that this happy improvement of



mutual relations is practically limited to the sphere of Protestant influence, that it is one of the fruits of that revised version of traditional Christianity which the Reformers were led to effect. Religious toleration and political liberty in the modern world are the progeny of the Reformation, and could hardly survive that reverence for "private judgment" which it affirmed.

In recent discussions on Reunion, notably in the Lambeth Conference, where such discussions were eager and protracted, I have been much impressed by the confidence with which it has been affirmed, and by the readiness with which it has been conceded, that the old issues of the Reformation are properly obsolete, and that nothing more is needed than patience, good temper, tact, and mutual explanation and concession to restore the visible unity of Christendom.

An example is provided in a curiously interesting little book, entitled *Lambeth and Reunion* (S.P.C.K., 1921), written by the Bishops of Peterborough, Zanzibar, and Hereford, as "an interpretation of the mind of the Lambeth Conference of 1920." The writers have actually persuaded themselves that "the one great difficulty in the way of reunion is the Bishop,"\* and they do not despair of removing this diffi-



culty by applying the same solvent as has removed every other :

“ As we emerge from the age of materialism we are less frightened at mystical interpretations of the visible order. Sacraments are becoming better valued. A thing is not necessarily to be rejected because it is involved in mystery. We are therefore hopeful that episcopacy may yet be studied from this, the mystical, standpoint.”\*

A whole chapter is devoted to an account of the Bishop as thus interpreted. It makes odd reading.

The Bishop, we are told, is “ the human centre of unity within the local Church ”; he “ stands for continuity ”; he is, “ mystically interpreted, the living human symbol of the paternal authority of God accepted within His family the Church.” Episcopacy “ is bound up with the incarnation of the Eternal Word.” “ No one but a Bishop can be a representative of the whole Church symbolically summed up in one living person.” Such language, perhaps, would be more naturally applied to the Pope than to the Bishop. In either application it is quite impressively remote from the references to Christian ministers found in the New Testament. It is, indeed, difficult to give it a precise meaning.

The three Bishops are extremely discontented with the English version of episcopacy, and, of

\* *Lambeth and Reunion*, p. 78.

course, it cannot be denied that the legal responsibilities of an English Bishop cannot possibly be harmonized with this picture of the Bishop as he ought to be.

Like Liguori's description of the *bonus confessorius*, it provokes the question whether this account of the *bonus episcopus* consists with human nature. "We have the treasure in earthen vessels," said S. Paul, but surely no "earthen vessel" could satisfy the following:

"He is father of all. No matter what his training and past experience, he is bound to inform himself of all that is believed and taught within his diocese and in other groups of the universal Church. He must be prepared to minister to all groups and parties. He must be so learned as to be competent to guide men and women within them all. We do not mean that he is to be a kind of Vicar of Bray. God forbid! We do mean that in accepting a call to the episcopate he must wholeheartedly throw himself into the overwhelming task of acting as a true father to all within his diocese. He must know the theological grounds of all that the universal Church allows anywhere within its boundaries, and must have sympathy with it. He must not allow prejudice to make him scornful of, or hostile to, any religious tenet or practice that is allowed its place within any one of the groups of the reunited Church. Where the whole Church allows disagreement, he will exercise his freedom of choice for himself. But officially he will serve those with whom he personally disagrees. And in those matters that are quite unessential, matters of

rites and ceremonies, he ought to be willing to act in any congregation he is visiting as the local custom demands. This is of the utmost importance if the group-system is to justify itself.”\*

The well-intentioned essay of the three Bishops has gone far to render the “group system” suggested in the Lambeth Appeal, not merely uninviting, but actually ludicrous. Their “interpretation” is perilously like a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Be this as it may, I am here concerned with insisting that the controversy between the Churches is not to be so lightly handled. We must settle it with ourselves before we set out to unify divided Christendom, what are our own first principles, what, in short, is the conception of Christianity which we ourselves accept. In this connection English Churchmen may study with advantage the Epistle to the Galatians.

Discussions about Reunion are apt to bring the secondary factors of Christianity into undue prominence. The concentration of thought on questions of polity—the Papal claims, the origin, nature, and authority of the Episcopate, the validity of Presbyterian ordinations, the necessity of the laying on of hands in ordination, the legitimacy of admitting women to Holy Orders, etc.—is likely to divert attention from those

\* *Lambeth and Reunion*, p. 84.

more fundamental questions of faith and morals which are being everywhere raised within Christendom, and which must finally be faced, and in some manner answered, by the Christian Churches. The traditional theology is plainly unsatisfying. The traditional morality is openly challenged. So great has been the revolution in human thought, and in the conditions of human life, within recent years, that the inherited standards of Christian belief and conduct are quite evidently inadequate to the requirements of modern Christians. There is an insistent and, I think, an increasing demand for a new theology and a new casuistry. The actual convictions of thoughtful and educated clergy and laity are often widely discordant from the prescribed language of the official formularies. This language, often archaic, sometimes but too lucid, can to some extent be explained, and to some extent fairly explained away; but the whole process of such explanation is at best a precarious method of bridging the chasm between profession and knowledge, and it may easily become actually demoralizing. The leaders of the Churches cannot much longer avoid the necessity of reconsidering their official creeds and confessions, and determining within what limits departures from the traditional belief may be rightly made by the laity,



and rightly proclaimed by the clergy. It is characteristic of our time that the moral code of Christianity is as vehemently challenged as the traditional theology.

Sexual morality is for the moment chaotic; the moral implications of economic life are obscure and confused. The war has raised many new questions, and given a terrible emphasis to many old ones. The authorities of the Christian Churches cannot much longer postpone or evade the necessity of facing these primary questions.

The Bishops, even if (which is incredible) they do not themselves share the doubts and perplexities which are troubling the minds of their religious contemporaries, cannot ignore the *signs of the times*. They must see, what only blindness can fail to see, that we are on the brink of a mortal struggle between the secularist and the religious interpretations of human nature and human duty, in which the very continuance of Christianity in any coherent and morally effective form will be brought into debate, and those principles of human intercourse which are the indispensable substructures of any genuinely civilized society will be challenged. The Bishops cannot ignore or disclaim their incommunicable responsibility. They dare not forget that both the specific pledges of their consecration to the



Episcopate, and the evident obligations of their position, pledge them to undertake the championship of the Church's faith and morality. When, therefore, they shall take in hand this most solemn and difficult task, everything will turn on the conception of Christianity which they, and the Church which they govern, have accepted.

The Anglo-Catholic, confronted by the challenge which the modern world offers to traditional Christianity, is as confident as he is plainly helpless. He uses a language unintelligible outside his own circle, and discloses a mentality so remote from that of his opponents as to make mutual understanding impossible. Of what real service can it be to meet the doubts of an educated modern Christian with the assurance that "the Catholic creeds and conciliar definitions may be relied upon as representing the nearest approach to absolute truth which finite minds are capable of apprehending"?\* Who can repress a melancholy smile when gravely assured that

"if we take what was actually taught by it (the Church) during the undivided period, and still is taught in common by the two greatest of Christian bodies—the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox—as authoritative, we shall find that we have a perfectly definite and coherent body of information about God, man, our destiny in the next world, and the way of salvation in this"?†

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\* Vide *Report*, p. 64.

† *Ibid.*, p. 67.

The remoteness from any apprehension of the modern situation which such language discloses is, perhaps, even more distressing than the futility of the actual affirmations. How the Roman Church would handle the problem of modern doubt has been sufficiently disclosed in the history of the Modernists.

## VI.

I must needs think, therefore, that the Anglo-Catholic Movement cannot possibly provide a satisfactory alternative to the Anglicanism which it is so busily engaged in destroying. Moreover, while its success in this work of destruction may not improbably be considerable, I do not believe it can replace Anglicanism in the acceptance of English laymen. So long, indeed, as the Church of England continues to be in name and legal status the National Church, there will be little disposition to enquire too closely into the policies and procedures of its members, for the generous assumption that a National Church ought to include many types of Christianity is firmly rooted in English minds. With the severance of the historic link between Church and State—a contingency which no considering Anglican can now regard as improbable or remote—this tolerant theory will be

subjected to a strain which it will hardly survive. For tolerance may easily be mistaken for approval. No doubt there are eclectic congregations in London and other large towns, and small coteries of lay-folk in many parishes throughout the country, which have adopted Anglo-Catholic beliefs and practices, read the *Church Times*, and can be counted upon for "demonstrations." But no one who has any direct and extended knowledge of the national life will suppose that these are representative of the general body of lay Churchmen. English religion is still, as for more than three centuries it has always been, Protestant to the core, and no religious appeal which ignores that fact will win the acceptance of the general body of English people. English religion, however, is now far less closely connected with ecclesiastical interests than in the past. The parish churches, which become distasteful to the Protestant laity, are quietly abandoned. In parish after parish Anglo-Catholicism has the field to itself. In the event of disestablishment and disendowment, I think the Anglo-Catholic Movement will be discovered to have a very slight hold on the country.

I think that in the future, as in the past, Anglicanism must justify itself on the principles of the Reformation. I believe that the religious crisis of our time can only be handled successfully

in the spirit, at once conservative and courageous, which led the English Reformers to bring the established medieval system of faith, worship, and discipline to the test of the New Testament. In the New Testament, now as then, we must find the unalterable first principles of Christianity. The task to which the modern Church is called is to harmonize those first principles with the accumulated knowledge of the modern world. It is a task both novel and familiar, novel because all the circumstances of human life are bewilderingly unlike those of the past, familiar because such harmonizing is the requirement of every revolutionary age. Christ's religion is no stereotyped system of thought and conduct, but a Divine power in human hearts and lives. It carries always the principle of adaptation, assimilation, absorption, growth, progress—in a word, the principle of life. "The Lord is the Spirit: where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Believing this, it follows inevitably that I regard with sympathy and confidence the policy of drawing the Church of England into closer fellowship with the other Reformed Churches. I welcomed the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference with respect to the Church of Sweden, and rejoiced that my visit to Upsala, for the purpose of delivering the Olaus Petri Lectures, happened to coincide with the Consecration of



Bishops in Upsala Cathedral, and so made it possible for me to join with the Bishop of Peterborough in representing the Anglican Communion on a memorable occasion. I can never forget the stately and moving ceremonial, the vast congregation, the fraternal behaviour of the Swedish ecclesiastics, and the generous hospitality of the Archbishop.

I noted with pleasure during some pleasant weeks in Sweden many indications of goodwill to the Church of England. Not the least significant of these is the tendency among Swedish scholars to make themselves familiar with English ecclesiastical history and institutions. Among such scholars, I take leave to mention my friends, the Rev. Samuel Gabriellson and the Rev. Yngve Brillioth, who have already done much to make Anglicanism intelligible to Swedish Churchmen. I am persuaded that the closer intercourse between the National Churches of England and Sweden will be greatly beneficial to both. Their co-operation could not fail to be widely advantageous to religion.

HERBERT DUNELM.

AUCKLAND CASTLE,

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## LECTURE I

# HISTORIC CONDITIONS OF MODERN ANGLICANISM

IN these lectures I do not propose to give, even in brief outline, a history of the Church of England, nor shall I attempt to explain in detail its legal and constitutional system, though it will be necessary both to refer to the history and to indicate the salient features of the system. My object is to help you to understand the form of Christianity which is commonly called Anglicanism, and which, though originating within the island of Great Britain, and largely shaped in its expression by insular conditions, has been carried far over the world by the English race, and now constitutes an important factor in the sum of organized Christianity.

A just estimate of modern Anglicanism is only possible on the basis of a sound knowledge of the history and constitution of the Mother Church; and, conversely, a right understanding of the actual situation within the Mother Church must give an important place to the Daughter Churches which within little more than two centuries

have grown up within the British Empire, in the United States of America, and beyond the frontiers of Christendom.

Christianity in England as elsewhere has been affected by conditions of time, place, and ethnical type. What is called the "insularity" of Anglicanism bears its origin on its face. It sprang from the physical fact that Great Britain is an island, and has been on that account affected less directly by the forces and tendencies which have shaped European Christianity. Everything in England arrived later, and operated with lessened vigour, leaving a larger opportunity of survival to local factors. It is, indeed, difficult to exaggerate the far-reaching consequences of this circumstance of English history in Church and State. The character of the people has been coloured by their isolation: the strength of their prejudices has been increased, and an attitude of aloofness, which might even be described as supercilious, has been fostered. Something must certainly be attributed to the circumstance that the English in Britain were immigrants, and that they brought with them both their women and their gods. The natural hostility of the British provincials was deepened by the difference of religion. Making all due allowance for the inevitable intercourse with the native British, it appears to be certain that, when S. Augustine landed at Ebbsfleet



in 597, the English were everywhere pagans. Unlike the Teutonic conquerors of Gaul, Spain, and Italy, the conquerors of Britain were not absorbed in the mass of their subjects. But, though they brought both wives and worships to their new homes, it is certain that the mere process of migration had enfeebled their ancestral religion. For that had had its strength in local associations—holy places, wells, trees, and hills—which could hardly be transplanted with the idols and priests. The rapid success of the Christian missionaries must in part be explained by the loosening of religious “use-and-wont” which had taken place among the English. When at a later period the Gospel was presented to the kindred races in their original homes, a far more obstinate and protracted opposition was offered; and the sword, which in England was little used, if used at all, was in Saxony and Frisia employed unsparingly. It is not wholly negligible that English Christianity had a composite origin. The apostles of England were not sent from a single Church, nor did they represent a single type of Christianity. The Roman and Irish evangelists laboured independently, and, if their labours did not mature in the creation of two rival Churches, the result was largely owing to the political prudence which preferred a connection with Rome, the home of culture and sacred

learning, to permanent identification with the semi-barbarous Christianity of Ireland.

Two circumstances of the English conversion left their impression on the Church of England, an impression which can still be traced: the missionaries were mostly volunteers acting with little if any reference to ecclesiastical authority, and they were for the most part monks. S. Augustine was, indeed, anything but a volunteer. He went forth reluctantly at the peremptory bidding of Pope Gregory, and the work from the Church which he established in Canterbury was always held closely to the Roman See; but over the greater part of the country that work did not penetrate. The Irish missions were essentially individual ventures, and to them, not to Rome or Canterbury, the Christianity of Northern and Central England is due. East Anglia was converted by the Burgundian Felix, who offered himself to S. Augustine for the work. Birinus, the Apostle of the West Saxons, is said to have been advised by Pope Honorius to attempt the conversion of those English to whom the Gospel had not yet penetrated, but he seems to have maintained no official connection either with Rome or with Canterbury. These separate and disconnected missions worked in a country divided into tribal kingdoms, which were continually at war, and among which the balance of power was

continually shifting. The missionary commonly attached himself in the first instance to the court of the tribal king, whose conversion was followed almost as a matter of course by that of his tribesmen, and whose kingdom became the diocese of the missionary Bishop. The great extent and irregular frontiers of the older English bishopricks are explained by these circumstances. They perpetuated into the nineteenth century the geographical arrangements of the Heptarchy. Even when Archbishop Theodore divided the original sees, he seems to have been careful to follow tribal boundaries. During the last century most of the older bishopricks have been subdivided in order to increase the number of Bishops, but throughout the greater part of its history the Church of England has been governed by a small number of Bishops governing large dioceses. Bishop Stubbs has pointed out the importance of the fact that the original missionaries were almost invariably monks:

“The conversion of England was accomplished principally, if not entirely, by monks either of the Roman or of the Irish school; and thus the monastic institution was not, as among the earlier converted nations, an innovation which rested its claim for reverence on the sanctity or asceticism of its professors: it was coeval with Christianity itself; it was the herald of the Gospel to kings and people, and added the right of gratitude to

that of religious respect or superstitious awe. Hence the system occupied in England and in the countries converted by English missionaries a position more really honourable and better maintained than elsewhere. Although the monasteries of France and Italy were larger and politically more powerful than those of England, they did not enjoy the same place in the affections of the people, nor were they either so purely national, or nurseries of patriotic spirit in the same way.”\*

An interesting relic of monasticism survives to this day in the cathedrals of the new Foundation—that is, the cathedrals which before the Reformation were monastic, and which the policy of Henry VIII. reconstituted.

“The monastic cathedral was an institution almost peculiar to England. The missionary-bishop, himself a monk, accompanied by a staff of priests who were also monks, settled in the chief city of a kingdom or province. He built his church; his staff of missionary monks became the clergy of that church; the church itself was called a monastery. As the mission work prospered the populations of the larger towns were converted, and settled clergy who were not monks undertook the spiritual charge of them. In time the overgrown dioceses were divided. The principal church of the district became the seat of a bishop, who might or might not be a monk, but who found his episcopal chair placed for him in a church which was of older foundation than itself, and

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\* Vide *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, by William Stubbs, p. 366.



which possessed a character that he ought not and perhaps had not power to infringe. The longer the subdivision of the original diocese was delayed, the more certain was the new bishop to find himself surrounded by a staff of secular city clergy. His cathedral continued to be an establishment of secular clerks, and when the name and usage of canonical life came into fashion they took, as a matter of course, the name of canons. In this way it happened that, whilst the newly founded sees of Anglo-Saxon bishops were placed in secular churches, the original settlements of the first missionary-bishops retained a monastic character.”\*

Another consequence of the exceptional importance of monasticism in the foundation of the Church of England is to be traced in the number and poverty of the vicarages, and in the considerable amount of tithe held by lay-impropriators. It would hardly be extravagant to ascribe the distinctive features of the English Reformation—its constitutional character, the retention of Episcopacy, and the Royal Supremacy—to the same cause. For the number and wealth of the monasteries exposed them to public obloquy at the very time when their extra-national organization offended the patriotic sentiment of the nation, and their devotion to the Papacy committed them to the least respectable factors of the older system. Their fall so weakened the spiritual estate in Parliament and Convoca-

\* Vide *ibid.*, p. 371.



tion that it could offer no effectual resistance to the Reformation, and their confiscated property placed a weapon in the hands of Henry VIII. which was more potent than any arguments of his theologians. It is significant that the Catholic reaction under Mary had to include a recognition of the property arrangements effected by the Dissolution of the monasteries.

The political development told with decisive effect on the history of the Church. When William the Norman struck down the old English monarchy at Senlac (1066), he brought the Church of England under the influence of the religious revival which, originating in Cluny, had transformed the Papacy, and was spreading rapidly throughout Western Christendom. The old intimacy of Church and State, derived from the circumstances of the original conversion, was incompatible with the new conception of the clerical character and function. No doubt it had consisted with, and even fostered, a low standard of clerical living, but it had avoided some of the disadvantages of the sharply defined dualism required by the clerical theory. When William issued a mandate for the separate constitution of the ecclesiastical courts, he definitely disallowed the earlier practice of the English Church as incompatible with "the decrees of the sacred canons." At the same time he opened

the door to the long controversy between the civil and spiritual jurisdictions, which continued in varying degrees of intensity until it was finally ended by the legislation of Henry VIII. At the time the Monarchy found in the spiritual estate its natural ally against the recalcitrant patriotism of the English people, and the turbulent individualism of the Norman barons. The great legislating and organizing Sovereigns of the twelfth century, Henry I. (1100-1135) and Henry II. (1154-1187), drew their principal lawyers and administrators from the ranks of the clergy, and tightened their hold over the hierarchy by systematically promoting their agents to episcopal office. Mainly, throughout the earlier period, the Church stood with King and People against the Baronage in the interest of social order; and when, in the person of John (1199-1216), the Kingship ceased to be the instrument of social order, the Church took a leading place in the movement which secured Magna Carta (1215). That movement may very fairly be described as national, and in the tradition of the English nation, Magna Carta has always borne the character of a supreme national act. There is, indeed, little in the document itself to justify this view, but, though in form Magna Carta is strictly feudal, and though its actual provisions do not go beyond accepted feudal procedure, its

spirit is large, and the circumstances in which it was secured gave it a unique significance. The first clause granted freedom to the Church of England:

“In primis concessisse Deo et hac praesenti carta nostra confirmasse, pro nobis et haeredibus nostris in perpetuum quod *Anglicana ecclesia* libera sit, et habeat jura sua integra, et libertates suas illaesas.”

The clause proceeds to specify freedom of elections, “quae maxima et magis necessaria reputatur ecclesiae Anglicanae.” Of the counsellors named in Magna Carta as advising the King to grant it the first was Stephen Langton, an Englishman who had been appointed to the Primacy by a masterful assertion of papal authority, and who, as a Roman Cardinal and Legate, might seem ill-fitted to represent the national character of the English Church. If, indeed, the Papacy had continued to assist the popular cause, the ecclesiastical significance of Magna Carta might never have been greater than that of other similar concessions to clerical demands. But, in point of fact, the Papacy speedily reversed its policy, and, for the brief remainder of John’s reign and throughout the long reign of his son, allied itself generally with the Crown against the Nation. The effect of this grave and sustained conflict of interest between the Papacy and the English

people was considerable and permanent. It was increased by the elaborate provisions for enforcing the Charter by ecclesiastical censures. A fourteenth-century casuistic manual, known as *Pupilla Oculi*, after quoting Archbishop Boniface's sentence of excommunication against those who infringed the provisions of Magna Carta, adds the significant comment: "Hos articulos ignorare non debent quibus incumbit confessiones audire infra provinciam Cantuariensem." When we remember that the hearing of confessions passed largely into the hands of the friars during the thirteenth century, and that the friars were generally sympathetic with the popular politics of the age, we can easily understand that the Charter acquired in their hands a considerable ecclesiastical importance. The expression "*ecclesia Anglicana*" was itself sufficiently ambiguous to admit of a variety of interpretation. Mr. McKechnie, the author of the leading English commentary on Magna Carta, thus comments on the phrase:

"It is interesting to note that, where the charters of Henry II. and earlier kings spoke of 'holy church,' Magna Carta speaks of *ecclesia Anglicana*. When English Churchmen found that the tyrant, against whom they made common cause with English barons and townsmen, received sympathy and support from Rome, the conception of an English church that was something



more than a mere branch of the church universal began to take a clearer shape. The use of the words *ecclesia Anglicana* may indicate, perhaps, that under the influence of Stephen Langton, English Churchmen were beginning to regard themselves as members of a separate community, that looked for guidance to Canterbury rather than to Rome. John was now the feudal dependent of the Holy See, and the 'liberty of the English church' had to be vindicated against the King and his lord paramount; the phrase had thus an anti-papal as well as an anti-monarchical bearing."\*

No medieval Churchman, indeed, would have conceived the notion of a national church which repudiated the spiritual authority of the Apostolic See, but much may be implicit which is neither perceived nor desired, and it is not extravagant to think that the phrase, "*ecclesia Anglicana*," silently acquired in English minds, under the conditions of the national history, a significance which originally and necessarily it did not possess. John, surely one of the meanest tyrants of history, was transfigured by the anti-papal prejudice of the Reformers until he wore the aspect of a champion of English liberty against the Pope. He was even pictured as an early Henry VIII. attempting a religious reformation. "How was our King John," writes Tyndale, "forsaken of his own lords, when he would have put a good and godly reformation in his own land." Jewell

\* Vide *Magna Carta*, pp. 191, 192 (Glasgow, 1914).



transformed the pusillanimous monarch who had become the Pope's liegeman into the innocent victim of the Pope's malignant hatred! Shakespeare threw the lustre of his incomparable genius over the legend of theological prejudice when he made King John the mouthpiece of the proud independence which marked the Elizabethan Englishman. To the demand of the papal legate the King replies:

“Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name  
So slight, unworthy, and ridiculous,  
To charge me to an answer, as the pope.  
Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England  
Add thus much more,—That no Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;  
But as we under heaven are supreme head,  
So, under him, that great supremacy,  
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,  
Without the assistance of a mortal hand:  
So tell the pope; all reverence set apart,  
To him, and his usurp'd authority.”

King Philip interposes with a protest, and is answered by another outburst of anti-papal sentiment:

“Though you, and all the kings of Christendom,  
Are led so grossly by this meddling priest,  
Dreading the curse that money may buy out;  
And, by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust,  
Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,  
Who, in that sale, sells pardon from himself;

Though you, and all the rest, so grossly led,  
This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish;  
Yet I, alone, alone do me oppose  
Against the pope, and count his friends my foes."

This was, no doubt, the way in which the Elizabethan Englishman looked upon Henry VIII., and Shakespeare in crediting such sentiments to the earlier tyrant was "playing to the gallery."

The friction between Church and State arising from the conflict of jurisdictions throughout Christendom was intensified in England by the course of political history. During the minority of Henry III. the authority of the Papacy within England reached its highest point; and precisely then the temptation to abuse it in the interest of the papal "war-chest" was strongest, for the struggle with the Hohenstaufen then reached its decisive phase. The papal victory was more apparent than real, for the prestige of the Papacy received a mortal wound. The papal policy was deplorably secularized, and the financial exactions rendered necessary by the cost of the conflict aroused in England a deep and lasting resentment. When, in the fourteenth century, the weakened Papacy fell under French control, and for many years was actually established at Avignon (1309-1376) within the French dominions, the anti-papal feeling in England associated itself with patriotic sentiment, and with

the reforming movement led by Wycliffe. While England and France were waging the Hundred Years' War, the Father of Christendom was, to all intents and purposes, a French prelate. Just then when the moral prestige of the Papacy had fallen to the lowest point, the supremacy of the Papacy within Christendom was asserted in the highest terms. The *Clericis Laicos* Bull issued by Boniface VIII. in 1296 was a direct challenge to the secular power, for it placed under excommunication all who imposed taxes on clerical property and on all who consented to pay them. Monarch and nation were agreed in resisting such an assumption of authority, for not only did it limit the allegiance of a numerous body of subjects, but it dislocated intolerably the financial system of the kingdom by exempting from taxation a vast mass of property. Accordingly, Edward I. met the publication of the Bull by the drastic but logical step of outlawing the clergy and seizing the temporalities of the Archbishop of Canterbury. A series of statutes passed in the course of the fourteenth century disclosed the hostile attitude which the English State had taken up against the Papal See. The Statutes of Carlisle (1307), Provisors (1351 and 1390), and Praemunire (1353 and 1393) restrained the exercise of papal patronage, prohibited suits at Rome, disallowed papal exactions, and placed under

penalty of outlawry and confiscation all who violated their enactments. Henry VIII. was able to clothe his innovations with a legal and constitutional aspect, because he found ready to his hand this body of anti-papal legislation, which not only put the spiritual estate within his power, but made it possible for him to justify his theory of the Royal Supremacy in the language of an ancient statute.

Nor was this all. Henry VIII. could count on an anti-papal tradition in the minds of the people, a tradition which had gone far beyond the political and financial issues with which Parliament had concerned itself, and had challenged the assumptions on which the vast fabric of medieval religion was built. The Lollard movement inaugurated by John Wycliffe (*ob.* 1384) reached formidable dimensions at the end of the fourteenth, and the beginning of the fifteenth century, when it was suppressed with some severity. Its association with the social discontent which had flamed out in Wat Tyler's rebellion discredited it in the view of the governing classes, and induced them to assist the more active dislike of the hierarchy, but, though officially suppressed, it persisted in the humbler ranks of society, and was unquestionably one of the forces which paved the way for the Reformation. "Even when its first violence was subdued," observes



Dr. Gairdner, "Lollardy remained a latent power in the community. Its leaven, indeed, was very widely diffused. Its teachings, for good and evil, have influenced human thought and action more or less through all succeeding centuries. They mingled with and domineered over the Reformation, though they did not bring it on."\*

The distinctive notes of the Reformation are all present in the movement of the Lollards—the insistence on Scripture as the final criterion of the ecclesiastical tradition, the hatred of monasticism, the scorn for the popular devotions, the special denunciation of the Mass, the emphatic assertion of "the priesthood of the laity." Copies of Wycliffe's Bible in many editions were widely dispersed, and thus was created a popular interest in the Scriptures, and the suspicion was fixed in the popular mind that the official hostility to vernacular versions of the sacred literature was occasioned by a less respectable reason than a scholarly zeal for accuracy or a pastoral concern for the spiritual welfare of the readers. Archbishop Arundel held a convocation in S. Paul's Cathedral "contra hereticos" in January, 1408, and issued a series of "constitutions." Of these the seventh may be quoted as an excellent example of the attitude of the medieval hierarchy towards Bible reading:

\* Vide *Lollardy and the Reformation in England*, i. 100.



“ Since it is a perilous thing, as S. Jerome testifies, to render the text of Holy Scripture out of one language into another, because in the translations themselves it is not easy to preserve the sense unaltered, as the said S. Jerome confesses, albeit he was inspired, that he himself often went astray herein: *We enact and ordain* that henceforward no one may render any text of Holy Scripture into the English or any other language in book, pamphlet, or tract; nor may any such book, pamphlet, or tract recently composed in the time of the said John Wyclif or since, or hereafter to be composed, be read in part or in whole, publicly or secretly, under penalty of the greater excommunication, until the said translation has been approved by the diocesan bishop, or, if the matter so require, by a provincial council: let the man who acts contrary to this constitution be punished as a supporter of heresy and error.”\*

The Act *De comburendo heretico* (1401) had placed a weapon in the hands of the hierarchy which it was not indisposed to use, and though the extreme penalty was exacted in comparatively few instances, they were enough to associate persecution and official orthodoxy in the popular imagination, and to create a tradition of cruelty which would weigh heavily on the reputation of the Bishops in the next age. England at the close of the Middle Ages possessed a strong monarchy, a highly developed national consciousness, a tradition of anti-papal prejudice, a statute-book containing stern laws against papal aggression,

\* Vide Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. iii. 317.

and a popular undercurrent of iconoclastic evangelicalism. The ecclesiastical system retained the features which had been stamped on it at the original conversion. The land was covered with monasteries, and the bishopricks were few in number and extensive in area.

Beside all other factors, however, and, perhaps more potent than them all, was the personal influence of the Tudor Sovereigns themselves. Henry VIII. and his three children, who successively occupied his throne, were no lay figures or mere symbols. Even the boy-king Edward VI. was by no means a negligible quantity; and his unhappy elder sister, Mary, by her fanatic violence, did more than himself to deepen and perpetuate the religious changes which he so ardently promoted and she so cordially hated. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth took the direction of ecclesiastical affairs largely into their own hands, and modern Anglicanism bears still the impress of their masterful and enigmatic personalities. The great Queen avowedly modelled her policy on that of her father, whom in mental type and temperament she closely resembled. Henry VIII. himself was the original and determining personal factor in the mingled process of the English Reformation. He was a thoroughly typical product of the Renaissance. He has been described as

“Machiavelli’s *Prince* in action,” and the description is not unjustified. Carefully trained and endowed with high abilities, he would certainly have made a great figure in any case, but in the extraordinary circumstances of his age he played a rôle which has no equivalent in any country. “Henry’s unique position among English kings,” says Dr. Gairdner, “is owing to the extraordinary degree of personal weight that he was able to throw into the government of the realm.” He was genuinely religious, though his religion had little effect on his personal morals, and he was keenly interested in theological controversy. His considerable abilities went along with an exorbitant vanity, which had been fostered by the circumstances of his earlier life. Success developed the baser sides of his masterful character, and his later years present the picture of a cruel despot such as the pen of Suetonius has delineated in the person of Domitian. His violent passions argued no kindness of heart. There has hardly lived any man more cold-hearted and indifferent to personal claims. Archbishop Cranmer was, perhaps, the only instance among the many eminent and devoted public servants whom he employed in his service of a man for whom he had a genuine personal regard. His conception of the royal prerogative grew ever more extravagant, and, though he

never actually invaded the sphere of the spiritual ministry, he spoke and acted as if he held himself to be, in the fullest sense of the extravagant term, the Head of Christ's Church within his dominions. All these personal traits, good and bad alike, were reflected in his ecclesiastical policy. Professor Pollard has pointed out the mutually irreconcilable character of those descriptions of this monarch which both belittle his personal quality and magnify his personal influence:

"Our account of Henry VIII. must be an answer to the problem presented by his reign, and we must explain how it came about that he was allowed to do the things he did. From a worldly point of view he was perhaps the most successful of English kings. He achieved nearly everything he tried to achieve, and his work was no mere transient triumph. It has lasted to this day, and become part and parcel of England as we know it. He broke the bonds of Rome; he subjected the Church to the State; he destroyed the Monasteries; he completed the union between England and Wales; he defeated the French and the Scots; he developed the parliamentary system; he extended and reformed English dominion in Ireland; he built up the English navy; he flouted both Empire and Papacy, and crushed with comparative ease the only revolt which Englishmen ventured to raise up against him."\*

If we enquire what induced this potent and amazing Sovereign to put himself at the head of the Reformation in England, we must answer

\* Vide *Factors in Modern History*, p. 80.



without hesitation that it was his squalid quarrel with the Papacy over the divorce from Catherine of Aragon. That was the precise degree of importance which belongs to the episode. It is wholly impossible to suppose that the Reformation would not in any case have taken place in England and established itself there; but apart from the divorce which gave Henry an urgent personal motive for breaking with the Papacy, it is difficult to think that he would have taken any other view of the agitation for Reform than that which was taken by his brother-sovereigns, Charles V. and Francis I. His training and instincts were not likely to predispose him in favour of ecclesiastical revolution. He had committed himself in controversy by his book against Luther, and he lay under some personal obligation to the Popes, from whom he had received the famous title, "Defender of the Faith." His personal orthodoxy remained unshaken to the end of his life, and his lofty conception of Monarchy suited ill with the levelling tendencies of the Reformed doctrine. Once carried into the position of accepting the breach with Rome, he gave to the Reformation in his kingdom a conservative and constitutional character, which had little in common with the revolutionary course which it pursued elsewhere. Henry VIII., being personally destitute of any desire to alter either the doctrine or the practice



of the Church beyond the point rendered necessary by the breach with the Pope, effected the independence of the Church of England in advance of its Reformation.\* He may be fairly described as the Founder of the National Establishment. Herein he did but carry to its logical conclusion the long controversy between the English State and the Roman Papacy, and gave complete expression to the proud self-consciousness of the English nation. The destruction of the monasteries was rendered unavoidable when once the national character of the English Church had been affirmed, for they were international institutions and were vitally bound to the medieval system which had its centre in Rome. The property of the dissolved foundations was required for the replenishing of the royal treasury, and for the bribing of the nobles to an acceptance of the royal policy. It may, indeed, be doubted if Henry could have maintained the severely conservative position which he took up in his last years, and there is some reason for thinking that he was actually contemplating a more liberal policy at the time of his decease, but he had lived long enough to give firmness to the national system

\* Cf. Gasquet, *Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 40: "So long as Henry lived the English Church, although deprived of some dignity and strength, in her outward appearance remained unchanged."

which he had established, and the doctrinal changes which followed did not alter his handiwork. Professor Meyer has well emphasized the distinctness of the two phases of the process by which the reformed Church of England took shape:

“The distinction between the reformation and the institution of a state church must be more sharply drawn in English than in German history. In England, the two things are quite separate in point of time, origin, and sphere of action. The establishment of a national church was the offspring of the late middle ages and was political in its origin, while its sphere of action was confined to Great Britain. The English reformation, on the other hand, only started after the national church had become an accomplished fact, *i.e.*, about the middle of the sixteenth century, and it ran its course well into the second half of the seventeenth. It was religious in its origin, and had a worldwide importance. . . .

“The English national church existed in fact long before the formal separation from Rome. The act of Henry VIII. in disowning the pope was not so much the beginning of a fresh development as the end of an old: it is rather the keystone of anglicanism than the foundation-stone of the reformation.”\*

Lord Macaulay, in a famous essay marked, perhaps, beyond any other by the violent prejudices which disfigured his historical writings, fastened

\* *Vide England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*, by Arnold Oskar Meyer, authorized translation by Rev. J. R. McKee (London, 1916).

on the same fact as giving the key to Anglicanism. Everywhere else, he says, "the contest against the papal power was essentially a religious contest," and everywhere else, though self-seeking and ambitious men joined in the movement, and were even welcomed as allies, the authors and leaders of the Reformation were religious men who "redeemed great infirmities and errors by sincerity, disinterestedness, energy, and courage."

"England has no such names to show; not that she wanted men of sincere piety, of deep learning, of steady and adventurous courage. But these were thrown into the background. Elsewhere men of this character were the principals. Here they acted a secondary part. Elsewhere worldliness was the tool of zeal. Here zeal was the tool of worldliness. A king, whose character may be best described by saying that he was despotism personified, unprincipled ministers, a rapacious aristocracy, a servile Parliament, such were the instruments by which England was delivered from the yoke of Rome. . . . Sprung from brutal passion, nurtured by selfish policy, the Reformation in England displayed little of what had, in other countries, distinguished it, unflinching and unsparing devotion, boldness of speech, and singleness of eye."

In all this there is much exaggeration and much prejudice, but through the caricature it is possible to recognize an important truth. The inversion of the normal order, by which the ecclesiastical system grows out of the religious revolu-

tion, is the key to Anglican history, explaining both the isolation and the incoherence of the English Church, but explaining also its unique independence of the distinctive limitations of the sixteenth century, and its special competence to unite varying types of Christian faith in a single fellowship. Lutherans and Calvinists followed the great spiritual champions whose names they were proud to bear, and whose characteristic ideas found expression, more or less complete, in the confessions and polities of the Protestant and Reformed Churches. No individual Reformer holds in the view of the English Churchman any such position of authority as that which is held by Luther, or Calvin, or Zuinglius, or even John Knox in the view of Presbyterians, on the Continent and in Scotland. The great Anglicans are concerned with explaining and defending an established system, and that system in its ecclesiastical arrangements was substantially medieval, and in its theology represented a compromise. Under Henry VIII., if any foreign divine can be said to have influenced his ecclesiastical policy, it was Erasmus rather than Luther. Cranmer, indeed, was early drawn to Lutheranism, and had a close personal link with the Lutherans, but, so long as Henry reigned, the relations of England with the Lutheran states of Germany were rather diplomatic than religious. The



coldest and briefest of the King's marriages, that with Anne of Cleves, was dictated by political considerations, and did not survive them. Erasmus, the supreme embodiment of the "new learning," had regarded with approval the earlier stages of the Reformation, but, as its anarchical potencies developed, he drew away, and reconciled himself to the Papacy. In England, Henry VIII., the best-educated monarch who has ever reigned in England, prided himself on his patronage of learning. Mr. Leach, the historian of English schools, gives a glowing description of the zeal for education which marked the destroyer of the monasteries:

"No king ever showed more desire to promote learning and learned men, and none was more impressed and desirous of impressing on others the advantages, or did more for the advancement, of education. Whether in the statutes of the realm or in the ordinances and statutes of the many foundations of his time, he was never tired of expatiating on the necessity of education and the benefit that educated men were to church and commonwealth."\*

In the conflict between the "old learning" and the "new," Henry ranged himself with the latter, and this circumstance was certainly not without influence on the course of ecclesiastical affairs. Religiously he was, as we have said, orthodox up to the end, but he surrounded him-

\* Vide *The Schools of Medieval England*, p. 277.



self with men of more liberal spirit than his own, and when he placed Thomas Cranmer in the chair of S. Augustine, he ensured the dominance of "sound learning" in the process of religious change. The liturgical and theological reconstruction which was carried through amid the distractions of the next reign would be conceived in that eclectic spirit which was distinctive of the new learning at its best. If Henry VIII. may justly be described as the author of the national establishment of the English Church, Cranmer may not less justly be described as the author of the distinctive religious system which the national establishment has expressed. In both cases the value and the permanence of the achievement arose from its correspondence with the history and temperament of the English people. The masterful Tudor did but sum up and formulate the tendency to complete national autonomy which had been gathering strength for many generations. The mild and learned Archbishop handled the medieval system of faith and worship in that cautious spirit, at once conservative and comprehensive, which, however repugnant to the ardour of fanaticism and inconsistent with the demands of religious theory, is the true temper of a genuinely national Church. The character of the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury has been variously estimated as his critics approve

or condemn his work. Apart from the inevitable provocation which he gave to those who resisted all religious change or disliked the changes which he effected, there was much in his troubled career which no just man could condone. His reputation suffered from his involuntary connection with the tyranny of Henry VIII., the misgovernment of Edward VI., and the squalid treason of Northumberland. The Catholic, the Puritan, the High Churchman, and the democrat have their several and sufficient reasons for reviling the memory of the man who promoted the breach with Rome, composed the Prayer-Book, gave a Protestant character to the Thirty-nine Articles, and acquiesced in the worst excesses of Tudor despotism. The brutal scorn of the Whig historian commanded the eager applause of the Tractarian leaders, and, perhaps, there is no section of the National Church which holds the name of Cranmer in such honour as the other martyred Bishops, Ridley and Latimer, command among modern Protestants, or as More and Fisher command among modern Catholics. Even the noble fortitude with which he met his death hardly succeeds in undoing the effect of the successive recantations which went before. Yet of all the Churchmen of his time it may fairly be questioned whether any was so well entitled to gratitude as a Reformer or to respect as a Christian.

Cranmer's mind was receptive rather than constructive: he could organize, but he could not originate. All through his life he was eager to learn, ready to receive, willing—perhaps too willing—to revise his beliefs. “The sons of Zeruiah” were too strong for him at all times, and forced him into approving or acquiescing in procedures which were alien to his disposition and contrary to his judgment. Consistency, the paramount virtue of small minds, had no special attraction for him, for he loved truth and pursued it. He was not only a very learned man, but he had the mind of a genuine student, and much of the genuine student's unworldliness. Throughout his arduous career he held fast to the student's laborious habit. More than any English ecclesiastic of his time he possessed the European mind. His knowledge of the Continent was acquired not only in the courts where he was received as a diplomatist, but in the universities where he came as a scholar, and in the circles of the theologians who welcomed him as a divine. His temper was rather that of the Renaissance than that of the Reformation. In an evil and evil-speaking generation his private life was without reproach. Never was Archbishop less of a prelate and more of a sincere and humble Christian. There was no trace of rancour in Cranmer: his friends spoke of his “incredible sweetness of manners,” his enemies commended his courtesy,

and his forgiving disposition became a proverb. "Do my lord of Canterbury a shrewd [*i.e.*, an evil] turn," writes Shakespeare, "and he is your friend for ever."\* The humility of S. Anselm and the learning of S. Edmund were united in him with the amiability of Juxon, the tolerance of Tillotson, and the harsh fortunes of Laud. His faults were those of his age: his failures those of his temperament. If just allowance be made for his times and his difficulties, and a just estimate be formed of the magnitude and permanence of his work, Cranmer must be reckoned one of the greatest Englishmen of history. In an epoch of critical importance he has his place with the decisive figures, with Henry VIII., his terrible master and friend, with the founders of the Protestant Churches, and with the leaders of the counter-reformation which sent him to the stake. Of the Reformers he most resembled the gentle and scholarly Melancthon, and had least in common with the inexorable Calvin. Luther's fervour of conviction was alien to him, but he shared the humanism of Erasmus and the civic consciousness of Zuinglius. The true successors of Cranmer were the Elizabethan Churchmen who under Queen Elizabeth took up his work, completed, and defended it—Matthew Parker, Jewel, and Richard Hooker. His spirit survived less in the hierarchy as a whole than in

\* Vide Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer*, pp. 315, 316.



the Oxford scholars who gathered round Lord Falkland in the time of Charles I., and in the Cambridge Platonists who taught a spiritual Christianity under Charles II. But, indeed, so long as the Prayer-Book remains in use, Cranmer will continue to influence and direct the Church of England. The Prayer-Book is his supreme and peerless achievement, and it will always be his sufficient title to the homage and gratitude of religious Englishmen.

Thus that dependence on the Monarchy which gave distinctive character to the English Church was stamped on it by the very circumstances of its reconstitution. The sixteenth century was the "golden age" of monarchy, when its theory was not only at the highest point but stood in closest connection with the thought and interest of the peoples. The general causes which throughout Europe were strengthening the national monarchies at the expense of class privilege and popular liberty were all operative in England. Henry VIII. conceived of his position as fully imperial, and followed the example of the Emperors during the long conflict with the Popes in the fourteenth century in using the Roman law as a textbook of monarchy. The Wars of the Roses had predisposed the nation to welcome a strong government, and the middle classes, which already had acquired in England a con-



siderable importance and were entering eagerly into the new commercial opportunities opened by the inventions and discoveries of the age, were generally favourable to the new religious teaching and inclined to support a reforming Sovereign. Henry VIII. not only shared with other monarchs the increase of power which accrued from the collapse of the international authorities of medieval Christendom, but acquired besides a vast and undefined authority over the National Church. The reforming divines were led by their dependence on the Bible to give religious sanction to the absolutism which the lawyers drew from the legislation of Justinian. The late Professor Maitland has well indicated the influence of the civil law on the Royal Supremacy:

“What an emperor did, a king who had ‘the dignity and royal estate of an imperial crown’ could undo. The theory of church and state which the civilian found in his books was the imperial papalism, the Cäsaro-Papismus, of Byzantium, and now what has been the one known antidote to this theory was to be placed out of reach: the schools of canon law were closed. If Henry was minded to be ‘the pope, the whole pope, and something more than pope,’ he might trust the civilians to place the triple and every other crown upon his head. In the eyes of ‘the common lawyers,’ whose traditions were medieval, the church might still have appeared as a power co-ordinate with the state, a power with which the state could treat, co-operate, quarrel; but the civi-

lian, whose sacred texts were shaking off the dust of the middle ages, would, if he were true to his Code and Novels, find his ideal realized when, and only when, the church had become a department of the state. The most superbly Erastian of all Henry's grandiose preambles (we might call it the *Unam sanctam* of the royal supremacy) introduces a statute that benefits the doctors of the civil law. They would not be ungrateful."\*

Dependence on the Monarchy preserved the English Church from the violent breach with the past which marked the Reformation on the Continent and in Scotland, but it carried the seed of great calamity in the future, when, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Monarchy came into open conflict with the nation. Under the influence of the Stuart dynasty the luckless doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings became the distinctive belief of the Church of England. It was expressed in extravagant terms, and associated with political action highly repugnant to the rising temper of English liberty. Accordingly, the Church fought and fell with the Monarchy. Laud, who had held towards Charles I. a position of intimate co-operation which was not unlike that which Cranmer in the preceding century had held towards Henry VIII., followed his royal master to the block. Neither the Monarchy nor the Church was restored to the old position, though in the vehement tide of reaction which followed the Restoration the history of the critical years

\* Vide *Canon Law in England*, p. 94.

of the Interregnum seemed to have been blotted out. Charles and Sheldon appeared to revive the old intimacy of Church and Monarchy, but the position had been changed beyond recovery. When the Monarchy became constitutional, the Church could not remain an enclave of personal government within the State. Nevertheless its system remained unaltered, and it entered on the modern epoch with the practical embarrassment of an obsolete organization. With every fresh step in the development of democracy, the ecclesiastical establishment has become more unintelligible and inconvenient, so that the movement for severing Church and State has been able to commend itself to many Englishmen who, without any sympathy with what are called "voluntaryist" or "denominational" theories of Christianity, are impatient of anomalies and abuses which hinder efficiency. Tied fast to the Monarchy, the Church became national in a very definite sense. It was identified with the nation in the same way as the Monarchy, and with the same measure of justification. The Tudors did succeed in a very remarkable degree in making their own interest coincide with the interest of the English nation. So long as the coincidence was actual and apparent, the Church of England could be bound fast to the Monarchy without compromising its national character, but when the Stuarts pursued a policy which was distasteful

to the nation as a whole, their failure involved also the failure of the Church. The Reformation of the English Church was effected in the national interest and by the national authority. The ecclesiastical factor was subordinate and, so to say, optional. Convocation might, or might not, be consulted. If it were recalcitrant, it was coerced or ignored. Cut off from the main stem, unsupported by the central authority of the medieval system, the English hierarchy was too feeble to stand against the imperious will of the Sovereign or the general sentiment of the people. The Reformation in England was the work of the laity, and implied the competence of the laity to handle spiritual affairs. Convocation had no share in the salient acts of the Elizabethan settlement—the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity. Only when the hierarchy had been purged and tamed could Convocation be permitted to resume its constitutional activity. The national character of the Reformed Church, thus determined by its dependence on the Monarchy, was justified by the precedents of the Jewish Monarchy and the early Christian Empire—the one implied the appeal to the Scriptures, the other implied the appeal to antiquity. This twofold appeal was the method of Anglican apologetic, on the one hand against the Papacy, on the other hand against the Puritans.



## LECTURE II

### THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

IF the Establishment of the Church of England could be referred to a particular event in the history of the National Church, that event would beyond all question be the passing of the Act of Uniformity in the year 1662. The full title of this crucial statute runs as follows: "*An Act for the Uniformity of Public Prayers, and Administration of Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies. And for establishing the Form of making, ordaining, and consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in the Church of England.*" This Act placed a term to the long and changing process of the English Reformation by stereotyping the triumph of the more conservative factors of that process. It bears the marks of the revolutionary crisis from which the nation had but just emerged, and its enactments are but too plainly coloured by the vindictive passions which that crisis had enkindled. After reciting the circumstances which had rendered legislation necessary, and the method by which the Elizabethan Prayer-Book had been revised, the Act legalizes the revised Book and



enforces its use under severe penalties. It requires from the clergy a declaration of "unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book." Even private teachers and schoolmasters are brought within the range of this legal requirement. The ninth clause excludes from office in the Church of England all existing incumbents who had not received episcopal ordination, and the tenth clause makes episcopal ordination indispensable for the future. This drastic legislation might be justified by the necessity of ensuring the internal coherence of the National Church. The extreme measure of domestic confusion which actually existed at the time might excuse severity, but beyond all question a formidable departure from the previous attitude of the Church of England was made. This departure must not be exaggerated nor misunderstood. That it was not designed to alter the relation which the Church of England had held toward the other Reformed Churches since the Reformation may fairly be inferred from the proviso in Clause XI.:

"Provided that the Penalties in this Act shall not extend to the Foreigners or Aliens of the Foreign Reformed Churches allowed or to be allowed by the King's Majesty, His Heirs and Successors in England."

This clause has been differently understood. Some have held with the late Dr. Sprott that it

“left the door open for the admission to benefices without reordination of foreign Reformed ministers.” Another interpretation, however, can claim the authority of a *contemporanea expositio*. The clause was designed to guard the interest of the existing foreign congregations. One of these, the Walloon congregation, which, since its formation in Edward VI.’s reign, had met in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, had not escaped the contagion of the prevailing sectarianism under the Commonwealth, and was distracted by a schism at the Restoration. In a petition of some members of the congregation addressed to Charles II. in 1662, reference is made to the clause in the new Act of Uniformity as guaranteeing the security of the foreign congregations in England. This may appear, perhaps, the most probable interpretation. The Deans and Chapters were required (Clause XXIV.) to provide sealed and certified copies of the Act with the Prayer-Book annexed, and these copies were to be preserved in the cathedrals to serve as local standards equal in authority to the original Book which the Convocations had subscribed. The “Sealed Books” contain the earlier Act of Uniformity (1559), which thus received, through the subscription of the two Convocations, a “spiritual” authority which it had hitherto lacked.

The immediate result of the Act of Uniformity was the disruption of the Church. For in the troubled interval of twenty years which preceded the Restoration episcopal ordination had not been within the reach of those who desired to enter the ministry of the National Church. These men, Puritan in belief and mostly Presbyterian in orders, included a large proportion of the more devout and energetic ministers. The Act confronted them with an intolerable demand. Only by repudiating as wholly wrong and destitute of binding force that "Solemn League and Covenant" which had expressed the hopes and convictions of Presbyterian Puritanism, and by accepting reordination at the hands of the Bishops, could they be suffered to continue in their parishes. Between 1,800 and 2,000 ministers retired from the Church to become the founders of a new nonconformity more respectable than that of the sects.

The retirement of these Puritan ministers struck a heavy blow at the spiritual prestige of the Established Church. The quality, moral and pastoral, of the new clergy who replaced the ejected Nonconformists was conspicuously inferior to that of their predecessors, and the circumstances in which they entered the ministry were not favourable to spiritual efficiency. National religion suffered deeply from the religious policy

of the restored Monarchy, but there was at least the compensating advantage that the Church of England became far more homogeneous. Its frontiers were narrowed, but its internal discipline was improved. The Act of Uniformity still binds the Church of England. The Toleration Act (1689) and the later legislation which secured civil equality to the Nonconformists mitigated its provisions and restricted its operation, but did not affect its authority over the English clergy. Not until 1865, when the Clerical Subscription Act was passed, was any alteration of the Caroline settlement in their respect effected. The ecclesiastical system established by the Act of Uniformity has remained practically unaltered until the present time.

The Act of Uniformity fixed the form of the Prayer-Book, and authorized it as the sole instrument of Anglican worship. By exacting from the clergy a solemn declaration of "unfeigned assent and consent to everything contained in and prescribed by" the Prayer-Book the Act seemed to clothe that Book with the character of a doctrinal confession, and to assume that the Book was doctrinally consistent with itself, and with the Thirty-nine Articles, which were the formal statement of Anglican teaching. Subscription to the Articles, which the Canons of 1604 required from every clergyman, were by the Act required from all



Governors or Heads of Colleges or Halls. These Articles, drawn up originally in Edward VI.'s reign, and sanctioned by the Convocation in a slightly amended form under Elizabeth, were strongly Protestant in tone, and expressed in their doctrine a modified Calvinism. They were not easily harmonized with the tone and teaching of the Prayer-Book, which reflected the larger mind and more devotional temper of primitive Christianity.

An English clergyman, at his ordination and on being instituted to a benefice, is required to make the following "Declaration of Assent":

"I, A. B., do solemnly make the following Declaration: I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, and to the Book of Common Prayer, and to the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I believe the Doctrine of the Church of England as therein set forth, to be agreeable to the Word of God: and in public Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments I will use the Form in the said book prescribed, and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority."

This formula was substituted for a more definite and stringent declaration, and was certainly designed by the legislature to remove the grievance which had been long felt, and which in the middle of the nineteenth century had become intolerable. The Thirty-nine Articles originally composed in Edward VI.'s reign, and revised at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, were



imposed on the clergy in 1562, and, in their present form, imposed again in 1571. In both years the action of Parliament went along with that of the Convocations. In 1604 the Articles were again imposed, and they have remained ever since the official statement of Anglican doctrine. In the year 1607 Thomas Rogers (*ob.* 1616), a chaplain of Archbishop Bancroft, published—or rather republished, for the substance of his work had appeared twenty years earlier—an exposition of the Articles, which had just been officially reaffirmed. The title of his work is suggestive:

“The Faith, Doctrine and religion, professed and protected in the Realm of England, and dominions of the same: Expressed in Thirty-nine Articles concordably agreed upon by the Reverend Bishops, and Clergy of this Kingdom, at two several meetings, or Convocations of theirs, in the years of our Lord, 1562 and 1604: The said Articles analysed into Propositions, and *the Propositions proved to be agreeable both to the written word of God, and to the extant Confessions of all the neighbour Churches, Christianly reformed.* The Adversaries also of note and name, which from the Apostles’ days, and primitive Church hitherto, have crossed, or contradicted the said Articles in general, or any particle, or proposition arising from any of them in particular, hereby are discovered, laid open, and so confuted. Perused, and by the lawful authority of the Church of England, allowed to be public.

“Rom. xvi. 17. I beseech you, Brethren, Mark them diligently, which cause divisions, and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have received, and avoid them.

“Printed by John Legatt, Printer to the University of Cambridge, 1607.”

Rogers was a Puritan, but he undoubtedly expressed the general estimate of the Thirty-nine Articles as demonstrating the Protestant orthodoxy of the Church of England. They have their place in the *Harmony of Confessions*, published at Geneva in 1581, and, in the English version, in 1586, to which Rogers referred as proving that “not only in every particular state or kingdom, but also throughout Christendom where the Gospel is entertained, the primitive and apostolical days were again restored.” This “Harmony” acquired considerable authority in England, and is even quoted in the Thirtieth Canon.

The question of the meaning and authority of the Thirty-nine Articles was raised in the case of the eminent Chillingworth (1602-44) whose great controversial work, *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way of Salvation* (1637), is an Anglican classic. As a very young man Chillingworth had fallen under the influence of the Jesuit missionaries, and had professed himself a Roman Catholic, but a few months’ personal contact with the Roman system in Douay had sufficed to open his eyes, and he had returned to the English Church. His keen intellect and sensitive conscience, however, were offended by the requirement of subscription, nor could he feel

himself untouched by the Fifth Anglican Canon, which pronounced excommunicated *ipso facto* everyone who should affirm "that any of the nine-and-thirty Articles . . . are in any part superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe unto." To the general doctrine of the Articles he had no objection, but there were some points on which he felt very strongly. In a letter to his friend Dr. Sheldon, afterwards the Archbishop of Canterbury (September 21st, 1635), he expressed himself with frankness:

"I am at length firmly and unmoveably resolved, if I can have no preferment without *Subscription*, that I neither can nor will have any.

"For this resolution I have but one reason against a thousand temptations to the contrary, but it is ἐν μέγα against which, if all the little reasons in the world were put in the balance, they would be lighter than vanity. In brief, this it is: as long as I keep that modest and humble assurance of God's love and favour which I now enjoy, and wherein I hope I shall be daily more and more confirmed; so long, in despite of all the world, I may, and shall, and will be happy. But if I once lose this, though all the world should conspire to make me happy, I shall and must be extremely miserable. Now this inestimable jewel, if I subscribe (without such a declaration as will make the subscription no subscription), I shall willingly and wittingly throw away. For though I am very well persuaded of you and my other friends, who do so with a full persuasion that you may do it lawfully; yet the

case stands so with me, and I can see no remedy but for ever it will do so, that if I subscribe, I subscribe my own damnation. For though I do verily believe the Church of England a true member of the Church, that she wants nothing necessary to salvation, and holds nothing repugnant to it; and had thought that to think so had sufficiently qualified me for a subscription; yet now I plainly see, if I will not juggle with my conscience, and play with God Almighty, I must forbear.

“ For, to say nothing of other things, which I have so well considered as not to be in state to sign them, and yet not so well as to declare myself against them; two points there are wherein I am fully resolved, and therefore care not who knows my mind. One is, that to say the Fourth Commandment is a law of God appertaining to Christians, is false and unlawful: the other that the damning sentences in St. Athanasius’s Creed (as we are made to subscribe it) are most false, and also in a high degree presumptuous and schismatical. And therefore I can neither subscribe that these things are *agreeable to the Word of God*, seeing that I believe they are certainly repugnant to it: nor that the whole *Common Prayer* is *lawful to be used*, seeing I believe these parts of it certainly unlawful: nor promise that *I myself will use it*, seeing I never intend either to read these things which I have now excepted against, or to say Amen to them.”\*

Some correspondence passed between Sheldon and Chillingworth, and in the end Chillingworth accepted Sheldon’s view as to the lawfulness of subscription *in foro conscientiae*. His position,

\* Vide Tulloch, *Rational Theology in England*, vol. i., p. 284 note.



which was certainly allowed by Archbishop Laud, is thus stated in the preface to his book:

“For the Church of England I am persuaded, that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that who-soever believes it, and lives according to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and that there is no error in it, which may necessitate or warrant any man to disturb the peace, or renounce the communion of it. This in my opinion is all intended by Subscription: and thus much, if you conceive me not ready to subscribe, your *Charity*, I assure you, is much *mistaken*.”

In 1638 Chillingworth's eminent service as a controversialist was rewarded by preferment, and he subscribed the Articles. “Beyond doubt,” says Principal Tulloch, “he came to see that subscription cannot mean to any rational and fully intelligent mind direct personal assent to all the particulars of a creed. This is really a higher and more thoughtful, if less enthusiastic, attitude than that expressed in his letter.”

Laud's own opinion had been set forth in 1624, when his account of his famous conference with the Jesuit Fisher was published. There he had distinguished between the subscription required by the Church of England, and the doctrinal demands of the Church of Rome. His opponent had quoted the Fifth Canon as an evidence of Anglican intolerance, but Laud insisted that he had quoted it wrongly:

“For it is one thing for a man to hold an opinion privately within himself; and another thing boldly and publicly to affirm it. And again, it is one thing to hold contrary to some part of an article, which perhaps may be in the manner of expression; and another thing positively to affirm, that the articles in any part of them are superstitious and erroneous . . . the Church of England never declared, that every one of her articles are fundamental in the faith. For it is one thing to say, No one of them is superstitious or erroneous; and quite another to say, Every one of them is fundamental, and that in every part of it, to all men’s belief. Besides, the Church of England prescribes only to her own children, and by those articles provides but for her own peaceable consent in those doctrines of truth. But the Church of Rome severely imposes her doctrine upon the whole world, under pain of damnation.”\*

Laud was temperamentally unable to appreciate the strength of the feeling which rendered the Puritans discontented with the Articles, though he could sympathize with the scruples of Chillingworth. The great controversy of the time was that which Calvin’s distinctive teaching had provoked, and the Seventeenth Article seemed dubious and even misleading to rigid Calvinists. This feeling had found expression in the Hampton Court Conference (1604) when Dr. Reynolds had urged that “the nine assertions orthodoxal concluded upon at Lambeth (1595) should be

\* Vide *Works*, vol. ii., p. 60, “Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology.”

inserted into the Book of Articles." His proposal was happily rejected, and the Articles continued to be regarded with some dislike by the disciples of Calvin. Laud, who "looked with the contempt of a practical man upon endless discussions about problems which it was impossible for the human intellect to solve," attempted to silence the whole controversy by a stroke of the royal authority. On June 14th, 1626, Charles I. had issued a proclamation prohibiting any public disputations which placed any controversial sense on the Articles. Laud thought this document might be given a permanent character. Heylyn thus describes his design:

"Having obtained this height of Power [*sc.*, as the King's chief adviser after the Duke of Buckingham's death] he casts his eye back on his Majesty's Proclamation of the 14th of June, Anno 1626. Of which, though he had made good use in suppressing some of those books which seemed to foment the present controversies, yet he soon found, as well by his own observation, as by intelligence from others, that no such general notice had been taken of it as was first expected; for being only published in Market Towns (and perhaps very few of them) the Puritan ministers in the country did not conceive themselves obliged to take notice of it. And much less could it come to the ears of students in universities, for whose restraint from meddling, either by preaching or writing, in the points prohibited, it might seem most necessary. He knew that by the laws of the land all ministers were to read the Book of Articles

audibly and distinctly in the hearing of their parishioners when they first entered on their cures, and that by the canons of the church all that took orders or degrees were publicly to subscribe unto them. A Declaration to the same effect before those Articles must needs give such a general signification of his Majesty's pleasure that nobody could from thenceforth pretend ignorance of it, which must needs render his transgression the more inexcusable. Upon which prudent considerations he moved his Majesty that the Book of Articles might be reprinted, and such a Declaration placed before them as might preserve them from such misconstruction as had of late been put upon them, and keep them to their native literal and grammatical sense. His Majesty approved the counsel as both pious and profitable, and presently gave order that all things should be done according as he had advised."\*

The King's Declaration has retained its place as the Preface to the Thirty-nine Articles, and as such it is included in the Prayer-Book. It is an illuminating and authoritative exposition of the Laudian theory of the National Church. That theory was hard to reconcile with the actual course of the English Reformation, and it was patently inconsistent with the theory of the English Constitution which was quickly establishing itself in the public mind of England. Accordingly it was hotly resented by the Parliament then entering on the conflict with the Crown, which would plunge the nation into civil

\* Vide Heylyn's *Life of Laud*, pp. 177, 178.



war, bring to the block both the King and the Archbishop, and overthrow the existing system in Church and State. For its immediate purpose, as a method for silencing controversy, the proclamation was a total failure, for the controversy it aspired to settle was too closely associated in men's minds with political differences which were irreconcilable. By its insistence on the grammatical sense of the Articles the Proclamation opened the door to the casuistry by which a Roman Catholic in the seventeenth century, and an Anglican in the nineteenth, sought to demonstrate the possibility of reconciling the letter of the Articles with the formal doctrine of Trent. Only by isolating the Thirty-nine Articles from the historical situation in which they were framed, and from the documents with which they were historically associated, and by disallowing the *contemporanea expositio* of their language, could so gross a paradox have been seriously maintained even by the polemical ardour of ecclesiastical partisanship.

In 1699 Gilbert Burnet, the famous Bishop of Salisbury, published his great *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, which remains still, after the lapse of more than two centuries, the most learned and satisfying summary of Anglican doctrine. The work had been finished five years before, and was now issued from the Press in order to meet the situation created by the Peace

of Ryswick (1695), which had opened England to the invasion of "a great swarm of priests, not only those whom the Revolution had frightened away, but many more new men, who appeared in many places with great insolence." In his interesting preface he reviews the course of events in England since the Reformation, and explains the purpose, method, and range of his work. He claims to have made a very complete survey of the controversial literature of the period, and describes himself as "to the greatest part rather an historian and a collector of what others have writ than an author himself." In the burning and protracted dispute about predestination he laboured to set forth the opposed views with scrupulous impartiality, but "owned that he followed the doctrine of the Greek Church from which S. Austin departed and formed a new system." He held the Church of England to be fortunate in containing and tolerating a large variety of opinion:

"We of this church are very happy in this respect; we have all along been much divided, and once almost broken to pieces, while we disputed concerning these matters: but now we are much happier; for though we know one another's opinions, we live not only united in the same worship, but in great friendship and love with those of other persuasions."

Burnet had many faults, which his numerous critics did not allow him to forget, but he could beyond his contemporaries emancipate himself

from the self-centred insularity which was, and is, the besetting sin of English Churchmen. He saw the religious situation in its European connections, and refused to separate the fortunes of the Reformation in England from its fortunes on the Continent. He recognized, as Sir Edwyn Sandys had recognized a century before, the disastrous political influence of the breach between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, which not merely lowered the spiritual quality of the contending Churches, but threatened the total ruin of their common interest. Yet even when denouncing this fatal discord, he felt that the combatants could plead that they were at strife over no petty issue. Far otherwise was it with the ecclesiastical conflicts within England, which, though they exposed the common religion to the utmost peril, were concerned with points of confessedly minor importance:

“ I shall conclude this Preface with a reply, that a very eminent divine among the Lutherans in Germany made to me, when I was pressing this matter of union with the Calvinists upon him, with all the topics with which I could urge it, as necessary upon many accounts, and more particularly with relation to the present state of affairs. He said, he wondered much to see a divine of the Church of England press that so much on him, when we, notwithstanding the danger we were then in (it was in the year 1686), could not agree our differences. They differed about important matters concerning the attributes of God, and His providence concerning the guilt

of sin, whether it was to be charged on God, or on the sinner; and whether men ought to make good use of their faculties, or if they ought to trust entirely to an irresistible grace? These were matters of great moment: but, he said, we in England differed only about forms of government and worship, and about things that were of their own nature indifferent; and yet we had been quarrelling about these for about an hundred years; and we were not yet grown wiser by all the mischief that this had done us, and by the imminent danger we were then in. He concluded, Let the Church of England heal her own breaches, and then all the rest of the reformed churches will with great respect admit of her mediation to heal theirs. I will not presume to tell how I answered this; but I pray God to enlighten and direct all men, that they may consider well how it ought to be answered."

Burnet discusses in his Introduction the precise significance of the subscription to which the clergy were obliged, and he disallows the liberal theory of Chillingworth, which to his view is true only in the case of the laity. For them these are only the Articles of Church Communion, and it suffices that they should think none of them so gravely false as to make Communion impossible. But the subscription of the clergy must mean more than this. He appeals to the title of the Articles, which states that they were compiled "for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, and for the establishing of consent touching true Religion." The language of the Fifth Canon and that of the



Statute of Elizabeth points in the same direction. "These things make it appear very plain, that the subscriptions of the clergy must be considered as a declaration of their own opinion, and not as a bare obligation to silence." But as mitigating the severity of this view he quotes Charles I.'s Preface, and argues that in requiring assent to the "literal and grammatical sense" of the Articles it permits a large liberty. As an illustration he names the Third Article, "Of the going down of Christ into Hell," which was literally capable of at least three senses, all of which were therefore permissible.

"If men would therefore understand all the other Articles in the same largeness, and with the same equity, there would not be that occasion given for unjust censure that there has been. Where, then, the Articles are conceived in large and general words, and have not more special and restrained terms in them, we ought to take that for a sure indication, that the church does not intend to tie men up too severely to particular opinions, but that she leaves all to such a liberty as is agreeable with the purity of the faith."

It would certainly never have occurred to Burnet that under this principle of interpretation a sense could be imposed on the Thirty-nine Articles which would transform them so effectually as wholly to destroy their value as an instrument for securing the National Church against those who repudiated the principles of

its Reformation. The bold essay of Franciscus de Sancta Clara to harmonize the Anglican formulary with the doctrine of Trent would have appeared to him, as to every other Anglican Churchman of his time, as an example of impudent sophistry in the interest of the Roman aggression. However liberally the general sense of an ambiguous Article might be understood when the "literal and grammatical" meaning of its language was alone insisted upon, yet the general sense itself was never in doubt. Burnet was an historian as well as a divine, and he held, as every historian must always hold, that the Thirty-nine Articles could not be interpreted apart from the known beliefs and intentions of their authors, from the evident purpose which they were designed to serve, and from their plain drift and natural impression.

"I considered that as I was to explain the Articles of this church, so I ought to examine the writings of the chief divines that lived either at the time in which they were prepared, or soon after it. . . .

"The first, and indeed the most best writer of Queen Elizabeth's time, was Bishop Jewel; the lasting honour of the see in which the providence of God has put me, as well as of the age in which he lived; who had so great share in all that was done then, particularly in compiling the second book of Homilies, that I had great reason to look on his works as a very sure commentary on our Articles, as far as they led me."

Burnet was at great pains to make sure that his treatment of the Articles was approved by the leaders of the Church. He undertook the work at the instance of the Queen and the Primate; the work itself was carefully revised by Tillotson and Stillingfleet, and read before publication by "several of the Bishops and a great many learned divines." It appeared with a dedication to William III. Nothing in fact was left undone to give the *Exposition* as representative a character as possible. The book, however, found no favour in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury. The clergy were greatly exasperated against the Bishops on political grounds, and of all the Bishops Burnet was the most politically odious. Accordingly in 1701 they seized the opportunity of giving expression to their resentment by attacking the Bishop's book. Burnet gives the following account of the incident:

"Hereupon they [*i.e.*, the clergy] being highly incensed against me, censured my *Exposition of the Articles*, which, in imitation of the general impeachments by the House of Commons, they put in three general propositions: First, that it allowed a diversity of opinions, which the Articles were framed to avoid. Secondly, that it contained many passages contrary to the true meaning of the Articles, and to the other received doctrines of our church. Thirdly, that some things in it were of dangerous consequence to the church, and derogated from the honour of the refor-

mation. What the particulars, to which these general heads referred were, could never be learned: this was a secret lodged in confiding hands. I begged that the archbishop would dispense with the order made against further communications with the lower house as to this matter; but they would enter into no particulars unless they might at the same time offer some other matters which the bishops would not admit of.”\*

The churlish action of the Lower House could not obscure the merits of the *Exposition* which was confessed significantly by the absence of any effective criticism. Abroad it was received with enthusiasm by the great Leibnitz, with whom Burnet had been in correspondence, and whose irenic projects he approved. The Treaty of Ryswick had disclosed to both men the danger to which the Protestant cause was exposed, and both judged the union of the Protestant Churches, Lutheran and Calvinist, to be urgently required in the common interest. Leibnitz studied with special care what Burnet had written on the Articles which dealt with predestination and the Eucharist, because they were the main points of division between Continental Protestants. A Latin rendering of the exposition of the Seventeenth Article was published at Berlin in the interest of peace.†

\* Vide *History of His own Time*, vol. iv., p. 526 (Oxford, 1833).

† Vide *A Life of Bishop Burnet*, by Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 367.



Burnet's *Exposition* held the field without a rival for nearly 150 years, for Bishop Beveridge's *Discourse upon the Thirty-nine Articles*, published posthumously in 1716, was too inferior in substance and literary workmanship to contest its position. The Oxford Movement, which in so many respects revived the interests and rekindled the controversies of the Laudian age, caused also the character and authority of the Articles to come again into question. For it was felt that the doctrine of the Tracts could with difficulty be harmonized with that of the official confession of the English Church. "The use and wont of the Church of England, as the Churchmen of the day and their fathers and grandfathers had known it, was condemned in every particular by the Tracts; and a window seemed at the same time to be opened in the direction of Rome." Newman was not unconscious of the apparent necessity of justifying his method. He stated his object in writing Tract XC. to be "merely to show that, while our Prayer-Book is acknowledged on all hands to be of Catholic origin, our Articles also, the offspring of an uncatholic age, are, through God's good providence, to say the least, not uncatholic, and may be subscribed by those who aim at being Catholic in heart and doctrine." The Tract ends with an apology for its method, written with the apparent candour and elusive subtlety which marks all its illustrious author's

work. He states the case against himself fairly enough:

“It may be objected that the tenor of the above explanations [*sc.*, those of the Tract] is anti-Protestant, whereas it is notorious that the Articles were drawn up by Protestants, and intended for the establishment of Protestantism; accordingly that it is an evasion of their meaning to give them any other than a Protestant drift, possible as it may be to do so grammatically, or in each separate part.”

On the natural assumption that the Articles were designed to serve their professed object of “the establishing of Consent touching true Religion” this objection might well seem fatal, but Newman returns an answer which he calls “simple.” Its gist is contained in the final sentences, which have a cynical and almost minatory ring:

“The Protestant Confession was drawn up with the purpose of including Catholics; and Catholics will not now be excluded. What was an economy in the Reformers is a protection to us. What would have been a perplexity to us then, is a perplexity to Protestants now. We could not then have found fault with their words; they cannot now repudiate our meaning.”

Newman postulates “a duty which we owe both to the Catholic Church and to our own, to take the reformed confessions in the most Catholic sense they will admit,” and says brusquely that

“we have no duties towards their framers.” In taking up this position he appears to be immersed in a twofold fallacy. On the one hand, his distinction between the Catholic Church and the Church of England is for an English Churchman wholly illegitimate and unmeaning, for the Church of England must needs be for him identical with the Catholic Church, and its variations from the general system be such as are implicit in the fact of its Reformation, and specifically justified by the principle of national autonomy in non-essentials on which that Reformation proceeded. On the other hand, there is no question of “duties owed towards the framers of the Articles,” but of an honest and reasonable subscription to the Articles themselves, which is the paramount duty which every subscribing clergyman owes to the Church of England when accepting the commission of its ministry. On the principles of interpretation advocated in Tract XC. it is obvious that subscription to the Articles would be robbed of all precise significance, for “the Catholic sense” in which they must *ex hypothesi* be understood is undefined, and could only mean whatever the subscribing clergyman chose to make it mean. Even the “literal and grammatical sense” required by the Laudian Preface provided no security against this unmitigated individualism, since Newman could argue that the Preface

“ was promulgated at a time when the leading men of our Church were especially noted for those Catholic views which have been here [*sc.*, in Tract XC.] advocated,” and that in forbidding any person to “ affix any *new* sense to any Article ” the Preface must be held to validate the prevailing sense which was “ Catholic.” The revolutionary character of Tract XC. was at once perceived, and provoked a great storm of protest. Authority, both academic and episcopal, repudiated such a handling of the Articles as uncandid, unreasonable, and unlawful. Newman himself and many of his disciples acknowledged the weight of this general condemnation by leaving the Church of England and joining the Church of Rome; but there were many of the Tractarians, less logical than Newman and with less sensitive consciences, who did not follow him, and they continued to avail themselves of the sophistry which he had provided in order to evacuate their subscription of the Articles of any meaning. Bishop Forbes put forth in 1867 *An Explanation of the Thirty-nine Articles, with an Epistle dedicatory to the late Rev. E. B. Pusey*, which applied Newman’s principle of interpretation systematically. He, too, held that “ the Declaration was the enunciation of the Catholic sense of the Articles,” and added that “ Tract XC. and the *Eirenicon* are legitimate outcomes of the King’s Declaration.” The older



and the sounder view had found expression in *An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, Historical and Doctrinal*, published in 1850 by Edward Harold Browne (1811-91), afterwards Bishop of Winchester, which replaced Burnet's *Exposition* as the authoritative textbook. His principles of interpretation are thus stated in the Introduction:

“ In the interpretation of them (the Articles), our best guides must be, first their own natural, literal, grammatical meaning; next to this, a knowledge of the controversies, which had prevailed in the Church, and made such Articles necessary; then, the other authorized formularies of the Church; after them, the writings and known opinions of such men as Cranmer, Ridley, and Parker, who drew them up; then the doctrines of the primitive Church, which they professed to follow; and lastly, the general sentiments of the distinguished English divines, who have been content to subscribe the Articles, and have professed their agreement with them for now 300 years. These are our best guides for their interpretation. Their authority is derivable from Scripture alone.”

With an apparent reference to Tract XC., he adds:

“ On the subject of subscription, very few words may be sufficient. To sign any document in a non-natural sense seems neither consistent with Christian integrity nor with common manliness. But, on the other hand, a national Church should never be needlessly exclusive.

It should, we can hardly doubt, be ready to embrace, if possible, all who truly believe in God, and in Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. Accordingly, our own Church requires of its *lay* members no confession of their faith, except that contained in the Apostles' Creed. . . . If we consider how much variety of sentiment may prevail amongst persons who are, in the main, sound in the faith, we can never wish that a national Church, which ought to have all the marks of catholicity, should enforce too rigid and uniform an interpretation of its formularies and terms of union. The Church should be not only Holy and Apostolic, but as well, One and Catholic. Unity and universality are scarcely attainable, where a greater rigour of subscription is required, than such as shall ensure an adherence and conformity to those great catholic truths, which the primitive Christians lived by, and died for."

The Thirty-nine Articles had always been disliked by "Anglo-Catholics" as incorrigibly Protestant in tone, drift, and substance, but they had been reduced to nullity by the sophistry of Tract XC. They were objectionable to more liberal Anglicans as being both excessively dogmatic and increasingly obsolete. From the time of Chillingworth until the present age this objection has been felt, and it has been met, as we have seen, by minimizing the doctrinal, and emphasizing the disciplinary, significance of subscription. The Articles, it has been held, are Articles of peace, Articles of communion, not, in the full sense, Articles of belief. This mini-

mizing view, however, has been felt to be always more politic and charitable than historically sound or morally satisfactory. The grievance which it was intended to remove has persisted, and from time to time found forcible expression. Liberal discontent with subscription was stimulated by the rationalizing tendency which swept over England in the course of the eighteenth century, and threatened to impose an Arian sense on the formularies of the Established Church. The orthodoxy of the Articles was as hotly resented by Deists and Arians then as their Protestantism by Tractarians since. It is interesting to observe that the advocates of the largest liberty of interpretation for the one set of aggrieved Churchmen have been the least disposed to make any concessions to the other. Waterland (1683-1740), in *The Case of Arian Subscription Considered*, urged roundly that "as the Church requires subscription to her *own* interpretation of Scripture, so the subscriber is bound, in virtue of his subscription to *that*, and *that* only; and if he knowingly subscribes in any sense *contrary* to, or *different* from, the sense of the *imposers*, he prevaricates, and commits a fraud in so doing." On this view the Tractarians would have found themselves barred from subscription, but as against unorthodox rivals the argument served well enough. Newman, even when putting forward his sophistical theory of

subscription, was careful to make it plain that he would be no party to any concession to Liberalism:

“If in any quarter it is supposed that persons who profess to be disciples of the early Church will silently concur with those of very opposite sentiments in furthering a relaxation of subscriptions, which it is imagined are galling to both parties, though for different reasons, and that they will do this against the wish of the great body of the Church, the writer of the following pages [*sc.*, Tract XC.] would raise one voice, at least, in protest against any such anticipation.”

It was entirely congruous with this attitude that the Tractarian leaders and the High Church party were actively opposed to the Clerical Subscription Act (1865), which mitigated the terms of clerical subscription with the professed object of relieving the grievance of Liberal Anglicans.

Every English clergyman is pledged to “assent” to the Book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, to believe the doctrine therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God, and to use the prescribed forms of public prayer and administration of the Sacraments. How is this pledge now interpreted by English Churchmen? The question must needs present itself to the least observant visitor’s mind, for the services of the Church of England, which this pledge was intended to render uniform, present a bewildering variety. In many parish



churches the appearance of the church, the type of the service, the dress of the officiating clergy, the behaviour of the congregations, and the teaching from the pulpits, are hardly distinguishable from those of the Church of Rome. All the distinctive features of Roman religion are becoming familiar in the Church of England—the Mass, the Reserved Sacrament, Incense, the Confessional, Invocation of Saints, the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Purgatory. The Thirty-nine Articles, which have generally been supposed to prohibit all these, are effectually neutralized by the “Catholic sense,” in which, on the principles of Tract XC., they must be understood. But the Prayer-Book remains, and it consists as little as the Articles with all these Roman practices and teachings. How has this difficulty been surmounted? The answer can be given in a phrase—the Ornaments Rubrick. In all the history of Churches there is hardly to be found a parallel to the transforming effect of the belated discovery that the Ornaments Rubrick, rightly comprehended, restores all that the Book of Common Prayer, of which it was the modest appendage, had been carefully designed to disallow.

The Ornaments Rubrick, which has exercised so potent an influence on the Church of England, is printed in the Prayer-Book immediately before

“The Order for Morning Prayer,” and runs thus:

“The Morning and Evening Prayer shall be used in the accustomed Place of the Church, Chapel, or Chancel: except it shall be otherwise determined by the Ordinary of the Place. And the Chancels shall remain as they have done in times past.

“And here it is to be noted, that such Ornaments of the Church and of the Ministers thereof, at all Times of their Ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England, by the Authority of Parliament, in the Second Year of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth.”

The first paragraph of this rubrick was the occasion of heated controversy in the seventeenth century; the last has provoked protracted litigation in the nineteenth. A voluminous literature has been produced, and the Law Reports contain a long series of judicial verdicts crammed with antiquarian learning. Almost every point remains yet in dispute, and probably will so remain, for the conclusions to which men arrive are so closely bound up with their religious predilections that impartial consideration of evidence is not to be looked for. What is the character, purpose, and effect of the rubrick? Is it to be regarded as itself a legal enactment, or is it rather no more than a reference to the provision of the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity

which is printed earlier in the Prayer-Book? What are the Ornaments referred to? What is meant by "retained and be in use"? by "authority of Parliament"? by the "second year" of Edward VI.? On all these points prolonged and indecisive debate has proceeded, and still proceeds. In 1907 a sub-committee of the Upper House, consisting of the Bishops of Salisbury, Bristol, Exeter, Gloucester, and Ely, presented a careful and learned Report on "The Ornaments of the Church and its Ministers." A very careful enquiry, which seems to have left no relevant facts out of consideration, led the Bishops to the surprising conclusion that the practice of the Church of England for 300 years, and the decisions of the Courts, were contrary to the requirements of the Ornaments Rubric, and that the "Mass vestments" had survived the Mass, and are legally obligatory on English clergymen. It needs no saying that, in spite of the personal authority of the five Bishops, and the elaborate care with which they considered the subject, this conclusion has failed to command general acceptance. Quite recently, Mr. Justice Coleridge has confirmed the interpretation of the five Bishops in giving judgment in *Gore-Booth v. the Bishop of Manchester*. Eucharistic vestments need not imply medieval doctrine, but their deliberate revival after the

disuse of centuries could hardly be without doctrinal significance; and in point of fact the revived use of the vestments has proceeded *pari passu* with a teaching with respect to the Eucharist which is hard to distinguish from that which prevailed in the medieval Church. The development of the Tractarian movement since the secession of Newman ended the academic and inaugurated the public phase of its history, has left the controversy about the Eucharistic vestments far behind. The principle that everything Anglican must be interpreted in a "Catholic sense" has been found capable of many applications. In the hands of the "Anglo-Catholics" the Ornaments Rubrick has been the magical formula by which the entire system of medieval religion, long abrogated by the law and long forgotten in the parishes, might be recovered. It was contended that every ornament which existed in the parish churches in the second year of Edward VI.—when practically the unreformed system still remained—was legalized by the rubrick, and then, by a still bolder flight of preposterous logic, that every ceremony for which the ornament was required, and every practice and doctrine which it implied, were also legalized. On these lines the whole process of the Reformation could be ignored, and the practical system of the medieval Church could be reinstated



in the parish churches under colour of the law.

Nor did the process of religious retrogression stop even there. For the "Catholic sense" which was to govern the English clergyman's interpretation of his legal subscriptions was itself changing. When Newman wrote Tract XC., the old Anglican appeal to antiquity was still supposed to be effectual against the claims of the Papacy and to yield a working theory of Catholicism. But the notion of development spoiled all. The witness of the Fathers was seen to be more favourable to the Roman type of Christianity than to the Anglican, and it could not be disputed that, if the process of development were allowed to be legitimate, the former rather than the latter had the stronger case. Accordingly, the latest phase of the Tractarian movement has been again Romewards as was the earliest. The Roman version of Catholic Christianity is being quickly identified with that "Catholic sense" which binds the Anglo-Catholic mind. An instructive illustration of the present tendency is the attempt to introduce the practice of "Benediction" into the parish churches. This popular devotional service, of which the distinguishing feature is a solemn blessing of the congregation with the Reserved Sacrament, was unknown in the Middle Ages, and has been introduced into the Roman

Church since the Reformation. Not even the Ornaments Rubrick could be seriously thought to legalize a practice which was unknown at the time it was framed. Only by identifying the "Catholic sense" with the Roman could an English clergyman, on Newman's view, hold himself free to introduce "Benediction." None the less this novel service proceeds in several churches, and will probably succeed quickly in establishing its place in the habit of Anglo-Catholics. It is not, however, undeserving of notice that the latest developments of the party have been viewed with considerable misgiving by the older men. The English Church Union has been divided on the subject of Benediction, both the late President, Lord Phillimore, and his predecessor, Lord Halifax, having declared themselves strongly opposed to the insubordinate action of the clergymen who have introduced the Roman service in disobedience to the explicit requirements of their diocesans. The future of the party probably lies with the younger members, and these are increasingly Roman in spirit and action. It is not easy to determine how strong a following the Anglo-Catholic view of English Churchmanship can command. Probably not more than a third of the clergy are definitely "High Churchmen," but this minority includes a disproportionate share of the more important

parish clergymen and most of the Archdeacons. A majority of the Bishops belongs to the same description, though none of them could fairly be reckoned among the supporters of the Romanizing views fashionable among the inferior clergy. How far the Romanizing movement has extended among the laity is not easy to determine. That the old fanatical "No Popery" sentiment, which once compelled the cautious regard of English statesmen, has decayed is as certain as it is satisfactory. Perhaps its last considerable outburst was that which carried the abortive "Ecclesiastical Titles Act" on to the statute-book, and then ebbed with such rapidity that the Act was repealed within a few months without provoking any public resentment. It would, however, be a bold inference that the profound suspicion and dislike of sacerdotalism has perished from the English mind. In view of the apparent political helplessness of the modern Papacy the old language of Protestant vigilance and apprehension has become rather absurd, and now only lingers on the lips of the ignorant and fanatical. Yet the religious consciousness of average Englishmen remains intensely Protestant. Any serious and general attempt to introduce the Confessional as a normal feature of parochial religion would be widely and deeply resented. Even in parishes where the services of the parish church have been

effectively Romanized there is often a strong undercurrent of popular repugnance, which sometimes expresses itself in absence from the public worship and secession to the Nonconformist chapels. Still it is the case that the efforts of an earnest and well-organized party during two generations have not been without result. There are many congregations, especially in London and the fashionable watering-places which reflect London fashions, to which the teaching and worship of Romanized Anglicanism have become dear, and which are ready to support their clergy, both against the verdicts of the law-courts and the authority of the Bishops. The Romanizing clergy are in some cases men of popular gifts and great personal devotion, attracting to themselves by the best of titles the love and confidence of their parishioners. Many are ardent Christian Socialists, and some have adopted the extremer views of Socialism itself. Indirectly the rapid rise of the artisans to political power in the wake of popular education has facilitated the success of the law-breaking clergy, for it has secured to them that sympathy with all forms of lawlessness which is the intelligible but dangerous characteristic of the poorest classes.



## LECTURE III

### PURITANISM

THE Reformation destroyed the unity of English religious life. For not only was the new doctrine rejected by a considerable number of Englishmen, but it was variously understood by those who accepted it. The Reforming movement everywhere had a Right and a Left, a party of Conservatives who would limit change to what was absolutely unavoidable, and a party of Radicals who would push change to its extremest logical requirement. From the breach with the Papacy under Henry VIII. to the excommunication of Elizabeth by Pius V.—that is, from 1533 to 1570—the restoration of the papal authority was not wholly outside the limit of practical politics. If Mary had been a less ardent disciple of the Counter-Reformation, and if her reign had been as protracted as that of her successor, it is probable that her religious system would have stood, and only fallen before the definite triumph of Calvinism at a later period; but her fanaticism and her death within six years of her accession to the throne made the victory of the Reforma-

tion a political necessity. Elizabeth, the daughter of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn, could hardly recognize the papal authority which branded her as a bastard. Her title to the throne was the will of her father, to whose policy she was attached both by interest and temperament. The extreme repugnance which the religious persecution and the apparent subordination of England to Spain had provoked in the public mind made her accession generally popular, and secured an interval during which her government could establish itself firmly. The intricate play of European politics co-operated with the situation within England to conceal, or at least to obscure, the religious policy to which she was necessarily committed, and the skilful diplomacy of the Queen took full advantage of the fact; but the definite triumph of the Reformation was never really in doubt, and had soon to be acknowledged both abroad and at home. Yet the European situation had an influence on the course of events in England. Throughout those first years of perilous weakness it was important, perhaps even vital, to avoid coming under the proscription of Pope and Emperor: and neither Pope nor Emperor was in a position to precipitate unnecessarily the total alienation of England. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) had differentiated Lutheranism from the extremer types of Reformed Religion,

and given it a recognized status. So long, therefore, as Elizabeth could pass as a Lutheran, or could give the impression that she shared the Lutheran dislike of Calvinism, she came within the sphere of tolerable religion, and was politically legitimate. It is not extravagant to suppose that the features of her religious policy—the retention of episcopacy, the removal of some anti-papal passages from the Prayer-Book, the suppression of the Thirty-eighth Article, the Ornaments Rubrick, the Crucifix in the Royal Chapel—which most offended the thoroughgoing advocates of Reform in England, and most perplexed the foreign Reformers, were designed to create an impression that the Queen was a Lutheran, or at least that she had Lutheran sympathies. The appearance was little more than a diplomatic ruse, for Lutheranism retained slight hold on England when Elizabeth ascended the throne. In the interval since Henry VIII.'s death the English Reformers had come generally under the influence of Calvin, and were disposed to look to Geneva for their models of doctrine and discipline.

The Fathers of the Reformation had had little knowledge of the magnitude and destiny of the movement which they had inaugurated; but as events followed in rapid succession, they found themselves carried far beyond their original positions. Their demand for the reform of prac-

tical abuses brought them into violent conflict with the vested interests of the medieval hierarchy, and forced them to raise the whole question of the authority by which, and the principles on which, the reformation of the ecclesiastical system ought to be effected. When the Papacy, itself the embodiment of the most scandalous abuses, refused the demand for reform, men turned inevitably to the State, which was the obvious alternative. In doing so they were not going outside medieval precedents. The abortive Conciliar movement of the fifteenth century had familiarized Christendom with the notion of ecclesiastical reform initiated and carried through against the will of the Pope. It had bequeathed a formidable suggestion to the monarchs of Europe. But the Council of Constance, which deposed John XXIII., had also condemned John Wycliffe and burned John Huss. The monarchs could not be trusted to reform the Church. The Reformers had perforce moved beyond the familiar medieval notion of reform, and were bringing under a relentless criticism the whole established system of doctrine and discipline. They were using the new weapon which the Humanists had supplied, the weapon of historical criticism, and they were applying the new standard which the Greek Testament had suggested. Early in the history of the Re-



formation, the great vernacular versions of the Scriptures were published, with the result that religious controversy ceased to be the monopoly of the learned, and became the absorbing interest of the multitude. The consequence was not wholly good, for if it must be allowed that the Bible in the hands of the common people made possible a higher standard of religious intelligence than had hitherto been general, it must also be admitted that a door was opened to much heresy and destructive fanaticism. The rapid multiplication of sects, which weakened and discredited the Reformation, was the first consequence of placing the Bible in the hands of the people, and bidding them draw their own conclusions from its pages. Individualism, unchecked by knowledge and unrestrained by authority, ran riot in the sphere of Biblical interpretation. Nor could the effect be limited to religious politics, for social oppression was as flagrant as ecclesiastical corruption, and perhaps more generally exasperating. The teachings of the prophets and apostles seemed to provide an authoritative condemnation of the social order under which the peasants were suffering grievous wrongs. It is not then surprising that the peasants began to apply to the nobility the principles of judgment which they had been encouraged to apply to monks and bishops. The Reformation became associated

with communism and anarchy, and the Reformers, to save their credit with their patrons, were led to the acceptance and defence of social and political conditions, which could not possibly be reconciled with the principles of the Gospel.

The general fortune of the Reformation had its counterpart in England, but there the social conditions, though hard, were less oppressive, the religious changes were more moderate and more gradual—above all, the central government was far stronger. Accordingly, there is no close Continental parallel to the religious Dissent which has played so large a rôle in the history of England.

Anglicanism can never be intelligible apart from a knowledge of Nonconformity. It is difficult, indeed, to say which is the most characteristic product of the English character. If Anglicanism expresses its balance, love of precedent, and tendency to compromise, Puritanism as certainly discloses its moral fervour and obstinate individualism. Both have been deeply affected in form and quality by the course of national progress. Both have left indelible traces upon that course; in the interplay of influences it is hard to say which has been dominant. It must suffice to insist that neither can be understood in isolation from the national history.

The origins of Nonconformity run back to the age of Wycliffe, for it cannot be doubted that the

movement of religious revolt which he inaugurated survived as an undercurrent of religious life in the country until the sixteenth century. Not without justification has Wycliffe been described as "the morning star of the Reformation." In the list of errors for which the Lollards were condemned we find all the characteristic tenets of the most extreme Reformers. But it was the Reformation which released into expression whatever discontent with the ecclesiastical system was latent in the popular mind. The circumstance that in England the Reformation was carried through by the national authorities, the King and Parliament, not only secured an avoidance of extreme procedures, but also postponed the bitter conflicts implicit in the movement. At the close of Henry VIII.'s reign, however, there were evident signs that a new spirit had entered into the process of reformation. With impartial severity Henry had condemned to death Papists and sectaries alike, but if his reign had been prolonged for a few years, the logic of events would have compelled him, however reluctantly, to declare himself on one side or the other, and, in the circumstances, he could hardly have avoided casting in his lot with the Protestants.

The old King's death opened the floodgates of innovation. Cranmer's influence and authority continued to exercise a conciliatory restraint,

but he was himself moving towards extremer views, and if Edward VI.'s reign had continued, or if Lady Jane Grey had succeeded in establishing her position, it is certain that the Reformation in England would have joined the main stream of the Reformation on the Continent. The Church of England would have been Calvinist in creed and Presbyterian in polity. From this prospect the Church was saved by the interposition of Mary's brief and unhappy reign, the consequences of which on the subsequent religious history of England can hardly be overestimated. On the one hand, the settlement which Henry VIII. and Cranmer had worked out was rescued from the discredit into which it had been plunged by the ill-government of Edward VI., and was consecrated by the martyrdom of its principal representatives. Cranmer crowned his services to the Reformed Church by dying for it. His martyrdom at the stake purged his vacillations, and gave stability to his work. On the other hand, the persecution had intensified and embittered the controversy; the points at issue were more fundamental than they had been under Henry VIII., when the conflict had hardly moved outside the familiar limits of medieval debate. The nature, extent, and method of papal authority had been much discussed in the fifteenth century, and Christendom was not unfamiliar with conflicts



between local churches and the Papacy, nor even with repudiation of papal claims. During the papal schism the national authorities had been compelled to decide which of the contending Pontiffs should be acknowledged as the lawful Father of Christendom. The crisis of the Reformation fell upon a discredited Papacy. Henry VIII. himself was never conscious of going beyond the limits of medieval orthodoxy, but on the Continent from the first the Reformation had had a more fundamental character. It had challenged the doctrinal tradition of the Church, and had broken with its characteristic discipline. The Continental Reformation was increasingly affecting opinion in England, but as long as the government of the country was itself committed to the work of reform, no open breach had been made between the Protestants and the national hierarchy. Under Mary, however, the national hierarchy succeeded to the Papacy as the principal opponent of the Gospel. Thus anti-episcopal feeling was created and apparently justified. The attack was directed rather against the central doctrines and practices of the medieval Church than against its constitution and policy; the Mass, not the Papacy, was regarded as the citadel of error. The notion of religious dissent from the State system became familiar and respectable, and the spiritual authority of the State received a

wound from which it never really recovered. The breach between the old system and the new became complete and unbridgeable; there was no longer, as had been the case under Henry, the assumption on both sides that a reconciliation was possible; a conflict of first principles had disclosed itself, and neither side was prepared to negotiate. When, therefore, Elizabeth aspired to pick up the threads of her father's tradition, and to re-establish the Church on the lines which he had laid down, the situation was no longer the same. In the interval between Henry VIII.'s death and Elizabeth's accession the religious movement from the Continent had entered England, joined hands with the sympathetic elements within the country, and transformed the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church of England. Elizabeth could perpetuate the ecclesiastical polity which her father had devised, but she could not re-create the intellectual and religious conditions under which he acted. The hierarchy which she succeeded in perpetuating was dependent on herself in a measure which was never the case under Henry VIII. When the Marian Bishops refused to accept the new settlement, the Queen was compelled to appoint a new hierarchy drawn from the Protestants, which was, indeed, sufficiently complaisant, but which carried little weight with the people. The Elizabethan

Bishops were for the most part themselves unsympathetic with the system which they were called upon to administer. Moreover, in the early years of Elizabeth's reign the final shape of the religious settlement was still sufficiently doubtful to make it difficult for the new Bishops to command general respect, nor can it be denied that, with few exceptions, neither their abilities nor their characters were such as to assist their official authority. During the Marian persecution many of them had been among the numerous English refugees who had found shelter in Germany and Switzerland, and on their return to England they did not readily break away from the fellowship which they had enjoyed abroad. The opponents of the Elizabethan settlement were, of course, in close alliance with the foreign Reformers—that is, with the Calvinists, for the earlier association with the Lutherans had not only ceased, but had been replaced by sentiments of active hostility. In the great schism in the Continental Reformation between the Reformed or Calvinist and the Lutheran or Evangelical Churches, which brought calamity upon so great a part of reformed Christendom, and gave strength to the Counter-Reformation organized by the Jesuits, the English Reformers, for the most part, allied themselves with the followers of Calvin. When, therefore, the Elizabethan settlement

succeeded in establishing itself, and grew strong with the strength of the Monarchy, drawing to itself the patriotic sentiment which the conflict with Spain stirred and raised to passionate fervour, the disaffected English Protestants, now coming to be known as Puritans, went into open opposition, adopted the Presbyterian polity, and even attempted to organize Presbyterian Churches within the national establishment. This phase of Puritanism was finally defeated by Archbishops Whitgift and Bancroft. It is to be noted that the Established Church throughout this period was definitely associated with the national cause. Patriotic Englishmen thought of the war with Spain and the Papacy as a Crusade, and pictured their nation as another "chosen people" ordained to maintain the Lord's cause against His enemies, and receiving no less authentications of Divine approval and providential mission. This attitude of mind was fostered by the study of the English Bible, now widely disseminated in the Genevan version. The Old Testament, perhaps, was studied rather than the New; the conception of the English as another Israel grew strong in English minds. The Puritans were compromised by their apparent disloyalty to the national system, on which were plainly visible the evidences of Divine approval. This phase culminated in the enthusiasm which was stirred by the great victory



over the Spanish Armada in 1588. The sectaries, who took up a position of open antagonism to the whole conception of a national system of religion were generally odious, and mostly were driven to take refuge in Holland. There they developed their systems and discredited themselves by their factions.

Another and more important chapter of Puritanism opens with the accession of James I. The canons of 1604 and their enforcement by Archbishop Bancroft may be said to register the definite triumph of the Elizabethan settlement, of which Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* provided the classical exposition. When Bancroft died in 1610, the Church of England was popular at home, respected and envied by the Protestants abroad. It possessed a prestige greater than, perhaps, it ever enjoyed before or since. In that year the eminent Huguenot scholar, Isaac Casaubon, took refuge in England. His coming was welcomed as evidence of the supreme position which the Church of England was admitted to hold among the Reformed Churches. Puritanism ceased to be associated with projects of ecclesiastical change and acquired a definitely moral character. It was concerned with developing a worthier type of Christian life within the Church. With the appointment of George Abbot to the See of Canterbury as Bancroft's

successor, a typical Puritan became head of the national hierarchy. The Calvinist theology at that time was carrying all before it. Both James I. and Archbishop Abbot were strong Calvinists, and when, in 1618, the King sent English representatives to the Synod of Dort, he was taking a step which commended itself generally to English Churchmen. James, however, was wholly unfitted to be the leader of a moral reformation. His court was disfigured by notorious scandals, his own private life was compromised by excess, extravagance, and dishonourable favouritism, and he set himself to resist and suppress the Sabbatarian movement, which, although irrational in many of its expressions, commended itself to the best and most religious members of the Church. When, moreover, the King developed his Spanish policy, he put himself in opposition to what the majority of his subjects justly held to be the evident interest of the country, both political and religious. The situation was completely reversed. Not the Arminian Bishops but the Calvinist Puritans became the exponents of English patriotism, which was becoming identified with the cause of liberty at home and the defence of the Reformation abroad. Calvinism, which was losing its hold on scholars and thinkers, gained new prestige as the creed of the Protestant champions. England could not really be neutral in the Thirty

Years' War (1618-48). Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, became the hero of religious men in England and Scotland, from whence numerous volunteers flocked to his banner. The situation, strained under James I., became rapidly acute under his successor. Charles I. had been bred in a hatred of Puritanism, and he was sincerely devoted to the narrow Anglicanism which was coming into fashion. When Archbishop Abbot died in 1633, his place was filled by William Laud, Bishop of London, the recognized and uncompromising opponent of the Puritans. The new Anglicanism was now supreme on the throne and in the hierarchy. It had little in common with that of the founders of the Reformed Churches. It was learned, patristic, sacramental, sacerdotal. Under Laud's leadership it was associated in the public mind, not only with efforts to raise the low standard of reverence, and to enforce ecclesiastical discipline, but also with ceremonial innovations and anti-Protestant teaching. Puritanism became the mark of the religious Conservatives who stood by the Elizabethan Settlement of the Church. The course of domestic politics became ever more troubled as the rising independence of the nation, stimulated by the change of religion and the war with Spain, came into collision with the conceptions of government which dominated Charles I. and

his advisers. Arminianism and extravagant doctrines of Divine right became associated together, and Puritanism began that connection with popular politics which has continued ever since. With the breaking out of the conflict between the King and the Parliament Puritanism entered on a new phase. The revolutionary years between 1640, when the Long Parliament assembled, and 1660, when Charles II. was restored, have determined the subsequent course of English religion.

Four facts are clearly discernible. First, *the religious cleavage became identified with the political conflict*, the King and the Church stood together against the Parliament and Presbyterianism. As the conflict proceeded and the Royalists were finally overwhelmed, the Monarchy and the episcopal system fell together. Together they suffered hardships and humiliations in exile. Together they shared exultation in a triumph so complete and unexpected as to appear almost miraculous. It is no wonder, therefore, that an extravagant royalism became characteristic of Anglicanism, and has survived to this day in the familiar division of political parties. Broadly, Anglicans are Conservatives, and Nonconformists are Liberals or Radicals. These party divisions are wearing thin before the rising of new issues and new dividing-lines, but they are not yet wholly obsolete.



Secondly, *the war gave an impetus to sectarianism*. Authority was weakened by the conflict, individualism was immensely stimulated, the final victory was won by an army headed by a Congregationalist, Cromwell, and largely composed of sectaries. Richard Baxter, the saint and exponent of Puritanism, has left a striking account of Cromwell's army which he visited after the Battle of Naseby to learn the fate of some friends who had been among the combatants. He arrived with the cheerful assumption in his mind that "when the Court News-book told the world of the crowds of Anabaptists in our armies" it was "a mere lie," but he left with the sorrowful conviction that the facts were far worse than the worst reports. He found the soldiers absorbed by the most subversive speculations, political and religious, and withal very confident of their approaching triumph:

"They said, What were the Lords of England but William the Conqueror's colonels? or the Barons but his majors? or the Knights but his captains? They plainly showed me that they thought God's Providence would cast the trust of religion and the kingdom upon them as conquerors: they made nothing of all the most wise and godly in the armies and garrisons, that were not of their way. *Per fas aut nefas* (By law or without it) they were resolved to take down, not only bishops, liturgy, and ceremonies, but all that did withstand their way."\*

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\* Vide *Reliquiæ Baxterianæ*, p. 51 (London, 1696).

With characteristic courage Baxter engaged in argument with these military theologians, and discovered running through their extravagances a principle, odious to himself, but destined in the future to gain wide acceptance and find fruitful application :

“ Their most frequent and vehement disputes were for Liberty of Conscience, as they called it, that the civil magistrate had nothing to do to determine of anything in manners of religion by constraint or restraint, but every man might not only hold, but preach and do in matters of religion what he pleased ; that the civil magistrate hath nothing to do but with civil things, to keep the peace and protect the Church liberties.”

The programme of the Liberation Society—complete religious equality secured by the complete secularization of the State—was already taking shape in the minds of the English sectaries. That programme, however, was not commended by its first advocates. A wider impression was made by the brutality of their behaviour than by the reasonableness of their professed ideal. It is probably true that the support of the sectaries delayed the triumph of toleration for many years.

In the third place, *the Great Rebellion created an association between Nonconformity and illiteracy, social inferiority, and fanaticism, which has, perhaps, done more than anything else to embitter the religious life of England, and has not even*

*yet wholly disappeared.* The leaders of Elizabethan Puritanism had been learned men, able to cross swords in controversy with Whitgift, Bancroft, and Hooker: even some of the founders of the sects had been educated at the Universities. At the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 Puritanism was represented by scholars. The conforming Puritans of the early Stuart period were men of learning. Davenant and Ussher were the most erudite members of the Episcopate, and both were Puritans. In the Universities Puritanism had its citadel, for the Calvinist theology was supreme, and it allied itself naturally with the Puritan habit. Nor was it only among ecclesiastics that Puritanism prevailed. It counted the most eminent statesmen and the leading nobles among its patrons. The rise of the sectaries to power in the Civil War created a schism between Puritanism and learning, or rather brought to rapid completion a process which had begun some years earlier. Controversy had been changing its form since the forces of the unreformed Church had been rallied and re-organized by the Jesuits. The simple polemic of the Protestant "Gospellers" required no greater equipment than the English Bible, ability to read it, and a boundless self-confidence. But as the range of debate extended in the hands of the professional gladiators of the churches, there

was need of a more ample armament and a more exact method. The sectaries were perpetuating a kind of controversy which had already become obsolete among scholars, and, if the political crisis had not intervened, would probably have passed quietly away. Not the least disastrous consequence of the Civil War was that it arrested this salutary natural process, gave new vigour to declining errors, and placed ignorance and enthusiasm in possession of power.

Puritanism was thus compromised by the sects. It was unjust but natural that the execution of Laud in 1645, and still more that of Charles in 1649, should have provoked resentment and horror which excluded discrimination and fair play. How deep an aversion was created by the experiences of the Commonwealth may be sufficiently disclosed by the brutal wit of Butler's *Hudibras*, the malignant rhetoric of South, and the language of the service added to the Prayer-Book for use on January 30th. It must not, indeed, be supposed that the religious effect of the Commonwealth had been wholly bad. Religion was carried into the use and wont of the common people; the Bible became the book of the English proletariat. A new type of pastoral ministry, pre-eminently illustrated by Baxter at Kidderminster, was added to the religious tradition of England. The intense emo-



tional strain of the time forced spiritual genius into expression. English literature was enriched by a classic, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the most original of denominational types was added to English religion by George Fox; but the definite alienation of the deeper Christianity of the common people from the National Church dates from this period.

Fourthly, *there was bequeathed to Anglicans and Nonconformists alike a legacy of injury which has ever since hindered their mutual understanding.* The iconoclastic violence which swept over the country left everywhere permanent memorials of its presence. Cathedrals and parish churches bore the traces of sectarian outrage, and perpetuated its memory; the country houses had been roughly handled, and they contributed to countless families an ever valid reason for private resentment. When the situation was reversed, and the persecuted themselves played the persecutor, the miserable history was repeated. All over the country in middle-class families there survived memories of oppression and hardship, which formed and still form a silent obstacle to religious peace. "Black Bartholomew," the eviction of the Nonconformists under the Act of Uniformity, is from time to time commemorated by Nonconformists, and the commemoration, however natural and legitimate, tends to keep alive the

memory of ancient wrongs which had better be suffered to die. The violence of the Commonwealth was the real cause of the vindictive procedures of the Restoration, and a principal, perhaps the principal, reason of the failure of comprehension in 1660 and 1689. The Caroline Code is only explicable as an example of panic-stricken legislation.

Nonconformity has been saved by its wrongs. Its theology was already obsolete in the seventeenth century. Its improvised politics, based on ill-understood texts from the Bible, have not been conspicuously successful. Its bald Judaic worship has little attraction for educated men. Only as waging a manly warfare for political liberty has it justified its continued existence. Here, indeed, it is difficult to over-estimate the value of its services to mankind.

The struggle for Toleration ended in the compromise of 1689. Dissent might exist and organize itself, on giving pledges of orthodoxy, and accepting a position of civil subordination. The Toleration Act required from the tolerated ministers subscription to thirty-six out of the thirty-nine Articles, the registration of their chapels, and the licence of the Bishops. It left the Dissenters subject to the disqualifications created by the legislation of Charles II. Of these the most serious, because the most subtly harmful,

was their exclusion from the Universities. The association of Dissent with ignorance, which was the legacy of the Commonwealth, was strengthened and largely justified. Yet even the modest concessions of the Toleration Act were not secure until the change of dynasty. The last years of Anne witnessed a revival of persecution which proved the strength of Anglican resentment. Had the Queen lived, or been succeeded on the throne by her brother, it is not probable that the Dissenters would have continued to enjoy even the limited benefits of the Toleration Act. The accession of the Elector of Hanover to the throne of Great Britain gave permanence to the policy of Toleration, and clothed the Dissenters with political importance as interested supporters of the Protestant Succession.

The struggle for toleration was followed by the struggle for civil equality. History again repeated itself. The effect of the long war with France in the generation before Waterloo had an influence upon the general life of England hardly, if at all, inferior to that of the long Spanish war in the sixteenth century. It cemented the alliance between Dissent and popular politics, and it hardened Anglicanism against reform. Still more potent, however, was a domestic factor, the rising of a new form of Dissent.

The Methodist movement arose within the

National Church, and was inspired by no desire to alter its system of doctrine or of government. It was a crusade against the practical paganism of the people, and it stirred a new and coercive sense of spiritual obligation both in the Church and in the State. When, however, the movement came into collision with the hierarchy, and drifted, or was driven, out of fellowship with the Church, it tended to become merged in the ranks of Dissent. This process had gone far before the French Revolution broke on the world, and it has now apparently reached completion; for all practical purposes Methodism is indistinguishable from Dissent.

The French Revolution soon took an anti-Christian character, and consequently the long war against it had, for the general body of English Christians, the aspect of a religious crusade. Whatever disposition there had been to sympathize with a revolution in France among those who boasted of being the political heirs of the earlier revolution in England was destroyed by the horror of the French atrocities and the scandal of French atheism. With the rise of Napoleon the war became a conflict for national independence. All domestic controversies were silent before an overwhelming peril, and all agitation for reform died away before the plain requirement of national unity. When, however, at



length victory had been won, the old questions were raised again, and had to be answered in novel circumstances. The half-century which included the French wars, and ended with the Reform Act of 1832, witnessed the beginnings of the process of social transformation which has made England the most completely industrialized member of the European Commonwealth. The effect on English Dissent was twofold—on the one hand political, on the other religious.

The new agitation for reform allied itself naturally with the old agitation for the removal of civil disabilities. Radicalism and Dissent ran together in the groove of a common purpose. Both tended to take up an attitude of hostility to the Established Church, which of all the national institutions seemed farthest removed from the spirit of democracy, most closely identified with social and political tenets which had become repulsive, and least able to justify its ample privileges by the plea of its public utility. The old religious differences between Anglicans and Nonconformists became more than ever bound up with the cleavage of class, economic interest, and political ideals. All this, from a religious point of view, was extremely unfortunate. Happily there was another side to the history of the time.

The new concern for the spiritual welfare of the people created by the Methodist movement had

induced a notable extension of evangelistic effort. In the crowded centres of industrial life Dissent had little or no connection with the old subjects of debate. In many places it had the ground to itself, for the provision of religious ministrations secured by the parochial system did not extend to districts which had been uninhabited, or inhabited but sparsely, in the distant period which had witnessed the organization of the parishes. Relieved from the practical necessity of doing battle with the Anglican enemy in the gate, Dissenters were free to develop the more truly religious attributes; they concerned themselves no more with denouncing Anglican corruptions, or vindicating the excellences of their own system, but with saving souls. In all directions there sprang up the ugly little brick chapels which became the spiritual homes of multitudes for whom the Church of England made no provision. Thus there has come into existence a new type of Dissenter, who is held to his denomination, not by a definite conviction of its exclusive validity or even of its superiority, but by the respectable title of an hereditary claim. "It is absurd to call us Dissenters," said an old Durham miner, when explaining his religious position, "for," he added, "there was nothing for us to dissent from." Present relations between Anglicanism and Nonconformity cannot be understood until

it is realized how complicated, ancient, and various is the historical background of the existing situation.

In the course of the nineteenth century the long battle for civil rights has been completely won, for the limitation to Anglicans of the Crown and the Lord Chancellorship can hardly be reckoned a disability for Nonconformists as such. The destruction of the elaborate fabric of privilege which had been erected for the security of the National Church will not, indeed, be completed until the Church has been disestablished, but none of the remaining privileges impinge on the rights or conveniences of Nonconformists. No hardship of any kind now attaches to religious Dissent in England. The absence of grievances removes the principal historic condition of Dissent, and goes far to destroy its *raison d'être*. At least, it can no longer connect itself with the incidental but important task of championing the national liberty. With the advent of democracy, the political work of Dissent has been finally performed, and for the future it must find its justifications solely in the religious sphere. Here, in common with the older forms of organized Christianity, the Dissenting Churches have been affected by the social and intellectual conditions of the modern epoch. The decline of the middle classes, which is the salient feature of social

development during the last two generations, has reduced the importance of the very section of the community from which the members of the Dissenting Churches have in the past been mainly drawn. Dissenters, therefore, no longer count for so much in the political life of the country. In vindicating for themselves a right to full access to the Universities, and in promoting the provision of efficient popular education, the Dissenters have brought their systems under a criticism which is by no means invariably sympathetic. For the great extension of interest in historical studies does not incline men's minds towards the recent and hastily improvised systems which Nonconformity has inherited from its obscure and troubled past. The educated imagination attaches to the noble monuments of the national history, and these are mainly ecclesiastical. Liturgical worship harmonizes better with the admiration for Gothic architecture than the crude improvisations of Dissenting religious habit: and the rigours of Calvinistic literalism, repulsive to modern students, have lingered longest in the chapels. Biblical criticism has undercut the main assumptions of the reasoning by which the founders of Dissent justified their distinctive doctrines and forms of polity. There is an unbridgeable chasm between the trust-deeds of the chapels and the teachings of their pulpits.



The rising standard of taste, aesthetic and literary, has come into open conflict with the severe and limited tradition of Nonconformity. "The Nonconformist conscience" has the unfairness, and also the effect, of a successful caricature.

If, indeed, there had been no counteracting influence it is difficult to see how the Dissenting systems could have persisted under the conditions of the modern world. In point of fact they not only have persisted, but have greatly extended their principles, and succeeded in gathering within their official ministrations a large and increasing proportion of scholars and divines. Two counteracting influences can certainly be perceived. Both have their roots in the seventeenth century but their principal expression in the nineteenth. At the end of Elizabeth's reign there was a brisk religious intercourse between England and Holland. It was natural that the English sectaries should take refuge in Holland when the persecution in their own country became insupportable. The English government would seem to have acquiesced in this self-banishment of disaffected subjects. Early in the seventeenth century the Puritan emigration to America began, and was facilitated by the government as not only relieving the situation at home but assisting in the development of the colonies across the Atlantic. It is just three centuries

since the *Mayflower* set forth on its historic voyage. Thus the religion of the English colonists received from the first a Puritan stamp. With the rapid development of the colonies the Puritan version of Christianity was far more widely extended until, at the present time, it is the prevailing type of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. The great variety of sectarian organizations consists with a substantial identity of religious type. Anglicanism outside of England is a comparatively recent growth, and, although within the last two generations there has been a great extension of the Anglican Episcopate in America and the Colonies, the majority of English-speaking Christians outside of England itself are not Anglicans. Very soon after establishing themselves in America the Puritans began the work of Foreign Missions. John Eliot, the Apostle of the Indians, was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, but had found the atmosphere of the home Church so uncongenial that he emigrated to America in 1631. He was a man of a truly apostolic spirit. For more than half a century he laboured at the conversion of the Indians. In 1649 there was formed in England *The Corporation for the Promotion and Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians of New England*. With the assistance of the funds which it supplied, Eliot published his version of the Bible in the

Indian language in 1663, and this was followed by many other publications. "There was no man on earth whom I honoured above him," said Baxter, and indeed he was a man worthy of all honour. It was, perhaps, no slight evidence of the homage which his character and labours inspired that the Corporation was revived and perpetuated by the government of Charles II. Eliot was the first of a great succession of foreign missionaries who have carried the Gospel into almost every part of the heathen world. It is to the immortal honour of the Puritans that they thus led the way in Protestant Foreign Missions. The great Anglican missions followed the precedent which the Puritans had created. English Dissent has gained in strength and prestige by its connection with the colonial and missionary churches, towards which it stands in the character of founder.

Still more important, perhaps, has been the development within the Church of England of a spirit and a teaching hostile to the Reformation itself. So long as the Church of England could justly be described as "the best and surest bulwark of Protestantism, the glory of the Reformation, and the express image of the purest antiquity," there was always force in the argument that Nonconformists suffered from a lack of proportion, and, in their zeal for non-essentials,

were endangering the very principles of the reformed religion. Under the first Stuart Kings the English Church began to draw away from the Continental Churches, and to insist with ever-waxing emphasis upon the importance of its distinctive polity. The Church of England was transformed by Archbishop Laud, and though indeed it remained strongly anti-papal it began to affect the style and advance the claim of a Catholic Church, from which non-episcopal churches were *ipso facto* excluded. With the expulsion of James II. and the accession of William of Orange the Protestant character of the English Church and nation was effectively demonstrated, but the extent of the breach with Anglican sentiment was disclosed by the schism of the Non-Jurors, with whom the Anglo-Catholicism of Laud seemed to have perished. Early in the nineteenth century that tradition was revived in the Oxford Movement. If, as at first seemed probable, that movement had in its turn expired by the secession of its leaders, the Protestant character of the Church of England would have remained as undisputed at the present time as it was in the eighteenth century. The rapid extension of the movement within the English Church had the effect of transferring to the Dissenters the responsibility of defending the principles of the Reformation. The Trac-



tarian Movement has steadily developed in a Romeward direction; Anglicans have been accustomed to dissociate themselves from Protestant interests and to dislike and even repudiate the Protestant name. It has followed that Nonconformity has acquired a new *raison d'être*, and now commands the sympathetic interest of all Englishmen who regard the Roman version of Christianity as unfavourable to political liberty and national character. Nonconformists, moreover, are rapidly moving outside the hampering sectarianism which disfigured their earlier history, and movements towards union are leading the way towards a larger federation of Nonconformists and Protestants. In the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches the broad lines of a united Protestant Church have been projected, and the time does not seem far distant when Puritan Christianity will have successfully emancipated itself from the difficulties bequeathed from the past, and adapted itself completely to the novel conditions of the modern world.

It has been necessary to survey the history and present condition of Nonconformity in order to understand and appreciate its influence upon Anglicanism. That influence, it would appear, has been almost uniformly unwholesome. Controversy rarely improves the spiritual quality of the controversialists, and almost inevitably leads

to a distortion of perspectives and the lowering of the spiritual level. Persecution hardens the persecutor and narrows the persecuted. It would appear certain that the long controversy with the Puritans, raised for the most part on issues which were comparatively trivial, had the effect of causing Anglicans to emphasize and exaggerate features in their religious system which were not of primary importance. The exaggerated importance laid on episcopacy is a case in point. Here, however, the influence of the controversy with Rome was perhaps even more potent than that of conflict with Nonconformity. We have seen how the sectarian violences of the Commonwealth bred in Anglicans an undying disgust of religious enthusiasm. This was extremely unfortunate, for religious enthusiasm can only be suppressed and repudiated by a Church at the risk of disowning the greater manifestations of the Divine Spirit. In point of fact, the tragic disaster which drove the Methodists out of the fellowship of the Church of England was the result of an unreasoning dislike of religious enthusiasm and a deep-seated suspicion of new departures in spiritual methods. Again, there can be no question that the conflict with Nonconformity, envenomed as it was by divergent political influences, difference of social types, and sometimes also by the conflict of economic

interest, had the effect of disinclining Churchmen to admit and remove abuses. Nothing, perhaps, has compromised the Church of England so gravely in the view of the labouring classes as the consistent refusal of Anglican Churchmen as a whole to remove anomalies and abuses which offend the Christian conscience and necessarily hamper Christian effort. The political action of the Bishops as peers of Parliament has seemed to identify the hierarchy with the unflinching and indiscriminating championship of privilege. It is certainly the fact that the Anglican Bishops at the present time find themselves at every turn confronted with a heavy historic indictment against episcopacy, based on the consistent opposition to reform which the Bishops maintained throughout the reforming epoch. There is, no doubt, a large measure of injustice in the indictment, but none can deny its plausibility and substantial truth.

## LECTURE IV

### THE ROMAN CONTROVERSY

THE controversy with the Roman Church has been one of the principal factors in the development of Anglicanism. In the early phases of the Reformation, the demand for changes in the ecclesiastical system proceeded from within the medieval Church, and were debated always with the supposition in men's minds that agreement might be reached, and the incalculable loss of an ecclesiastical disruption averted. Schism was a spiritual calamity which no controversialist could contemplate without consternation and repugnance. When at his degradation (1556) Cranmer appealed "unto a free General Council, that shall hereafter lawfully be, and in a sure place," he was in fact taking his stand on familiar ground and echoing the language of the earlier time. He disclaimed the character of novelty for his doctrine, and refused to be described as a heretick:

"I may err, but heretick I cannot be, forasmuch as I am ready in all things to follow the judgment of the most sacred word of God and of the holy catholic church,



desiring none other thing than meekly and gently to be taught, if anywhere (which God forbid) I have swerved from the truth."

Looking back with the guidance of later history we can see that this appeal could not possibly succeed. Had it been frankly allowed, the state of Christendom rendered the gathering of a free General Council altogether impracticable. Had the Papacy been as well disposed towards religious reformation as it was in fact relentlessly hostile, the conflicting secular interests would have rendered effective action impossible. So much had already been demonstrated by the failure of the reforming efforts of the preceding age. The triumph of the General Council over the Papacy had been both partial and temporary. Constance and Basel were the monuments of a great failure and a sorrowful disillusionment. Religious reformation, men knew well in their hearts, had even less to hope for from a General Council than from a Pope, for while a sincere Reformer might conceivably have mounted the papal throne, no assembly of medieval hierarchs could have seriously addressed itself to the drastic changes which were needed. Had Cranmer appeared before a General Council, he must needs have experienced the same treatment as John Huss had received from the Fathers of Constance. The political interest of the Popes had always

been a more dominating influence on their action than any moral or religious considerations. They were incapacitated for the task of ecclesiastical reformation by their secular concerns as well as by their moral inadequacy. No Pope was ever a free agent. The demands of the conscience could never be satisfied by the methods of diplomacy. Far into Elizabeth's reign, indeed, the door of reconciliation between Rome and England remained formally unclosed, but controversy had been taking an ever more fundamental character, and, when the Counter-Reformation organized by the Jesuits had been authoritatively adopted by the Council of Trent (1545-63), the whole situation was transformed.

There was no question now of making terms with the Papacy. The axe was laid at the root of medieval religion. An alternative version of Christianity was formulated, and presented as the Gospel marvellously recovered after a millennium of eclipse. The maintenance in England of the medieval polity, parochial, diocesan, and provincial, created a situation which has no precise parallel elsewhere, for the hierarchy, though shorn of its pomp, stripped of much of its wealth, and greatly reduced in its number by the abolition of the monasteries, remained an integral part of the national system, and entered as such into the foreign politics of the kingdom. In the process

by which the Anglican Bishops recovered much of their old character, and provoked against themselves the suspicion and resentment of the more ardent advocates of the Reformation, an important place must be assigned to causes which had no connection with religion. Elizabeth could not afford to abandon episcopacy. The spiritual peers numbered no less than twenty-six against the fifty-nine lay peers, and they secured to her government control of the Upper House. By keeping bishopricks vacant and herself absorbing the revenues, the Queen assisted her treasury. The Episcopate in England seemed at one time likely to shrivel into something akin to the "tulchan" Bishops in Scotland—*i.e.*, sponges to absorb the episcopal revenues for squeezing into the royal exchequer. It was important for Elizabeth, while yet her government was recent and weakly established, to emphasize the difference between the ordered religion of the Church of England and the anarchic movements on the Continent, which were both disloyal and unorthodox. The congruity of monarchy and episcopacy became a favourite theme of Anglican apologists. Against the Pope they could urge both the numerous medieval precedents of hierarchical revolt against secular sovereignty, and the exorbitant theory of papal supremacy which the Jesuits elaborated and

defended; against the Puritans they could point out the suggestive association of Presbyterianism and rebellion.

The Church of England was in a special degree odious to the Papacy, for the method and character of its Reformation rendered it a far more formidable adversary than any other reformed communion. Against the Lutherans of Germany the power of the Emperor could be invoked, for they evidently threatened the unity of the Empire. Against the Calvinists in the Low Countries, in Switzerland, and in France, it was easy to enlist the power of the governments, which were plainly threatened by the democratic temper of Calvinism. Her political interest compelled Elizabeth to assist the Huguenots and the Dutch, but her political theory would rather have led her to co-operate in their suppression. When James succeeded to the same situation, he found that there were serious scruples in some minds as to the rightness of assisting rebels. The elaborate canons, adopted unanimously by both Convocations in 1606, laid down the obligation of civil obedience in such absolute terms that the necessary distinction between governments *de jure* and *de facto* seemed to be ignored. With his usual acuteness the King perceived this, and made it a reason for withholding his approval. In England the Reformation had been itself originated and



carried through by the Sovereign, whose power had been greatly increased by the process. So far from the breach with Rome having involved any weakening of the monarchical idea, the precise opposite had been the effect. The English Reformers clothed the kingship with the attributes of the Jewish monarchs and the Roman emperors. In their hands the Old Testament became the Divine Charter of Absolutism. In the canons of 1604, and at greater length in the abortive canons of 1606, Bancroft elaborated the Anglican doctrine of kingship, and the unfortunate canons of 1640 completed the statement. The King of England was plainly a more absolute Sovereign than his medieval predecessors, and, so far as ecclesiastical affairs were concerned, than his brother-monarchs. It followed that the English Reformation provided an attractive precedent which other Sovereigns, emulous of a like autocracy in the Church, might be tempted to follow. The idea of a national church had very obvious recommendations in the age of national monarchies, and the conservative and constitutional character of the English Reformation rendered it intelligible and even attractive to men bred in the medieval tradition. The ecclesiastical changes in England stood obviously in the line of familiar and recent precedents. Even within the Council of Trent the nature and extent

of episcopal authority were obstinately debated. Episcopacy had nothing to fear from the appeal to antiquity, which certainly disclosed a Papacy far different from that which the men of the sixteenth century had to reckon with. There was nothing wholly novel or wholly unattractive about an episcopal revolt against papal authority. The superiority of a General Council to the Pope had been the principle of the great reforming efforts of the fifteenth century.

The Roman controversialists found the Church of England very embarrassing. As against non-episcopal Reformers in revolt against their own Sovereigns, they could argue boldly that Rome stood for the tradition of Christendom and the principle of civil order. Neither claim held good against the episcopal national Church of England. Here the arguments were reversed. The Anglican champions maintained an older tradition than that of Rome, and displayed a more convincing concern for civil authority. Of course, when the deeper issues of the Reformation were in debate, the controversy was transferred to a plane where neither ecclesiastical tradition nor secular expediency could carry decisive weight.

The Counter-Reformation, organized by the Jesuits, met with such considerable success that the total defeat of the Reformation on the Continent seemed no impossible result. Burnet,

writing at the end of the seventeenth century, reviewed the progress of the Reformation, and said that "it had now for above an hundred years made a full stand, and in most places had rather lost ground than gained any," and he attributed the fact to "the reformation that Popery had been forced to make," which "had in a great measure stopped the progress of the reformation of the doctrine and worship that did so long carry everything before it."

Sir Edwin Sandys, a son of the Archbishop of York, the pupil and intimate friend of Richard Hooker, one of the most respected and influential of English politicians in the reign of James I., has left on record his impressions of the religious situation in Europe at the close of the sixteenth century. His *Survey of the State of Religion in the Western Parts of the World* is addressed to Archbishop Whitgift, and dated "from Paris, April 9th, 1599." It is an illuminating and suggestive description of Christendom from the point of view of an educated Anglican in the age which witnessed the definite establishment of the Church of England. He points out that the rapid initial successes of the Reformers had taught wisdom to their adversaries, who soon began to turn their enemy's weapons upon themselves with such effect that the whole appearance of the conflict had been changed. The Protestants no longer

went forward in a course of assured and rapid victory. The final issue had become doubtful, and triumph even seemed to incline to the well-disciplined forces of the Papacy. The pulpit, the public debate, the pamphlet, the learned controversial work, the education of youth—all the potent instruments of Protestant warfare had been taken over by the Jesuits, and were being used with a calculated policy and a concentrated purpose which Protestants could not in their divided state hope to equal. Especially in organizing schools the skill and zeal of the Order had been conspicuous. Always the educational effort had been subordinated to the controversial purpose:

“In all places wherever they can plant their nests, they open Free Schools for all studies of humanity. To these flock the best wits, and principal men’s sons, in so great abundance that wherever they settle other colleges become desolate, or frequented only by the baser sort and of heavier metal; and in truth such is their diligence and dexterity in instructing, that even the Protestants in some places send their sons unto their schools upon desire to have them prove excellent in those arts they teach. Besides which, being in truth but a bait and allurement whereto to fasten their principal and final hook, they plant in their scholars with great exactness and skill the roots of their religion, and nourish them with an extreme hatred and detestation of the adverse party. . . . I shall not need here to insert their singular diligence and cunning and enticing not seldom the most noble of their scholars, and oftentimes the most adorned with the graces



of nature and industry; especially if they have any likelihood of any wealthy succession, to abandon their friends, and to profess their order (a thing daily practised by them in all places); yea, wherever they espy any youth of rarer spirit, they will be tampering with him, though he be the only son and solace of his father. . . .

“But this point of their schools and instructing youth is thought of such moment by men of wisdom and judgment, being taught so by very experience and trial thereof, that the planting of a good college of Jesuits in any place is esteemed the only sure way to replant that Religion, and in time to eat out the contrary. This course hold they in all Germany, in Savoy, and in other places; and the excluding it from France is infinitely regretted, and that which makes them uncertain what will become of that Kingdom.”\*

While, then, the situation on the Continent was becoming so unfavourable, the Church of England stood out as the very citadel of the Reformation. The traditional policy of the island realm was illustrated in the ecclesiastical as in the secular sphere. England obstructed the triumph of a single power on the Continent of Europe. Elizabeth might dislike the Reformers in France, Holland, and Scotland, but her political instinct would not suffer her to desert them. In all these countries she assisted a type of Reformed Christianity which she would not tolerate within her own dominions, and she earned for herself the plenary hatred of an

\* Vide *State of Religion*, p. 90 f. (London, 1673).

enemy with whose principles of government she mainly agreed. The political ruin of England became indispensable to the Counter-Reformation precisely because in England national independence was the common interest of Church and State. It was impossible to overcome the Reformation on the Continent so long as the Continental Reformers found a base of operations and an inexhaustible recruiting-ground in the island kingdom. Patriotism and Churchmanship became identified in the realm of Elizabeth, and the cause of Rome became indissolubly associated with treason in English minds. The defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588) seemed to add an almost miraculous demonstration of Divine approval to the national cause. Bishop Carleton (1559-1628) gave expression to the general view in his treatise, *A Thankful Remembrance of God's Mercies in an Historic Collection of the Deliverances of the Church and State of England from the beginning of Queen Elizabeth*, published in 1624:

“ Let others boast of their strength or wisdom, or deep policies, their invincible armies by sea and land; we glory in the name of our God, which hath done so great things for us. If a man with an impartial eye look upon these, though he be an enemy, though he be a Jesuit, he must needs confess that God was on our side. . . . Now this being a thing confessed on all sides, that God was with us against the Spaniard, why will not our adversaries, that are men of understanding, enter into the considera-

tion of this cause which God hath so often and so mightily maintained ?” \*

The years from Elizabeth's accession in 1558 to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 were, save for the brief revolt of the Northern earls in 1569, years of unbroken tranquillity in England itself, but they synchronized with the religious wars of the Continent. It was the golden age of the English National Church, when the ecclesiastical system was strong, not only by the patronage of the Crown, but also by the affection of the people. Learning was honoured and rewarded by a learned Sovereign at the head of a learned and relatively wealthy hierarchy. Religion, in the picturesque phrase of Edmund Burke, “exalted her mitred front in courts and parliaments.” This was the period to which Anglicans in later times looked back with regretful admiration. Foreign Protestants regarded the island Church with a wondering envy. A critical scholar, little disposed to exaggerate the claims of the English Church, has described the measure of justification that existed for this large repute:

“Though the Jacobean divines do not constitute an epoch of learning, they represent a stage on the road towards it. Critical enquiry was not only unknown, but

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\* Vide *A Thankful Remembrance*, p. 159.

was proscribed. Yet a zeal for reading and patristic research characterized them, which abated the raw ignorance of the preceding century. They were led into the region of learning. Barren as their controversial pamphlets are, yet theology approached the ground of scientific criticism more nearly than amid the bandying of scriptural texts, which had been the controversial form of the century of the reformation. Anglicanism was purging itself of its fanaticism, and leaving that element to the puritans. It is true that all study was theological, and that the theology was contentious, not scientific. But at any rate there was study. A German visitor, young Calixtus, always said that 'his tutors in Germany had not done as much in spurring him on to the study of ecclesiastical history as had the English bishops, and the well-stored libraries he had seen among them' during his visit in 1612. The influence of Andrewes on Cambridge could not but be beneficial. We find him 'making continual search and enquiry to know what hopeful young men were in the university; his chaplain and friends receiving a charge from him to certify what hopeful and towardly young wits they met with from time to time.' The instructions issued by the crown to the vice-chancellor of Oxford, 'according to which young students were to be incited to bestow their time in the fathers and councils, schoolmen, histories and controversies, and not to insist too long in compendiums and abbreviations,' are in the same direction. 'You must not suppose,' Casaubon writes to Saumaise, 'that this people is a barbarous people; nothing of the sort, it loves letters and cultivates them, sacred learning especially. Indeed, if I am not mistaken, the soundest part of the whole reformation is to be found here in England, where



the study of antiquity flourishes together with zeal for the truth.' ”\*

Papists, writes Sir Edwyn Sandys, felt “hatred for the Lutheran, the author of their calamity; but hatred and fear both of the Calvinist only, whom they account the only growing enemy, and dangerous to their state.” They were prepared to give “some blind hope to the Lutheran of quiet and toleration so he will join against these the fretters of both.” The Church of England provoked a distinctive resentment as combining a Calvinist theology with a more than Lutheran moderation of temper and system, and still more as being inseparably linked with the waxing power of the English State, which was ever more plainly coming to take a decisive influence in European politics as the guardian of the Balance of Power.

“But of all places their desires and attempts to recover England have been always, and are still, the strongest; which, although in their more sober moods, sundry of them will acknowledge to have been the only nation that took the right way of justitial reformation in comparison of others who have run headlong rather to a tumultuous innovation (so they conceive it), whereas that alteration which hath been in England was brought in with peaceable and orderly proceeding by general consent of the Prince and whole realm representatively assembled in solemn Parliament, a great part of their own clergy according and conforming themselves unto it:

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\* Vide Mark Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon*, p. 327.

no Luther, no Calvin, the square of their faith; what publick discussing and long deliberation did persuade them to be faulty, that taken away, the succession of Bishops and vocation of Ministers continued; the dignity and state of the Clergy preserved; the honour and solemnity of the service of God not abased, the more ancient usages of the Church not cancelled; in sum, no humour of affecting contrariety, but a charitable endeavour rather of conformity with the Church of Rome in whatsoever they thought not gainsaying to the express Law of God, which is the only approvable way, in regard of the power and renown of the prince, and of their exemplary policy in government of the state, in regard that they concurring entirely with neither side, yet revered with both, are the fitter and abler to work unity between them, and to be an umpire also, director and swayer of all, whensoever there should be occasion of assembling their councils, or of conjoining their forces for the common defence; and especially for that it is the only nation of the Protestant party able to encounter and affront their King.”\*

That was the core of the gravamen of the Papacy against the Church of England. It obstructed the triumph of the Counter-Reformation which had become identified with the ambitious policy of the Spanish King. Sir Edwin Sandys writes with the patriotic exaggeration of an English Churchman, but he places his finger on the true reason for the peculiar malignity of Roman polemics against Anglicanism.

Casaubon was soon joined by another refugee

\* Vide *State of Religion*, p. 227.

whose character and fortunes attracted much notice from his contemporaries. Marcus Antonius de Dominis was in the early stage of middle age when he sought the protection of the English Court, and had been for fourteen years Archbishop of Spalato. Well endowed by nature with intellectual powers, he had been trained by the Jesuits, and was known to be a man of eminent learning. Had his character been worthy of his intellect he would have counted among the most illustrious men of his time, but his ambition, venality, and falseness alienated everybody, and his miserable death in the dungeon of the Inquisition at Rome could not outbalance the contempt which he had evoked. "Conscience in show and covetousness in deed caused his coming hither," says Fuller severely. There was a mixture of motives. The scruples of a genuine scholar, the vanity of a popular preacher, and the perilous courage of a born controversialist united in De Dominis with the anti-papal prejudice of a Venetian subject and the personal resentment of an injured man. At Venice he happened to fall in with two eminent Englishmen, Sir Henry Wotton and his chaplain William Bedell, who appear to have turned his thoughts to England, where the reigning Sovereign was keenly interested in the standing controversy with Rome. He was warmly welcomed, for the defection of an Arch-

bishop was felt to be no common incident. James I. was immensely pleased and flattered. Presents and preferments flowed in. The stranger was made Dean of Windsor and Master of the Savoy; he made himself, by a piece of sharp practice which caused unpleasant observation, Vicar of West Ilsley. His popularity ebbed as quickly as it had risen, for he disclosed a griping avarice which disgusted everybody, and an arrogance which was curiously offensive in a refugee. Still, his controversial services were very considerable. In 1617 he published the first part of his great polemical work, *De Republica Ecclesiastica*, and two years later he followed it up with an edition of Father Paul's famous *History of the Council of Trent*.

"Indeed," writes Fuller, "he had a controversial head with a strong and clear style, nor doth an hair hang at the nib of his pen to blurr his writings with obscurity: but first understanding himself, he could make others understand him. His writings are of great use for the Protestant cause."\*

Cosin, in his *Historia Transubstantiationis Papalis*, written in France about 1656, but not published until 1675, writes of De Dominis with marked respect and describes his misfortunes with sympathy. He says that he had deserved well of the Church of God, and was deservedly numbered among the writers of the English Church.

\* Vide *Church History*, vol. v., p. 510 (Oxford, 1845).



Until the Revolution had definitely tied the Monarchy to the Protestant interest, the foreign policy of the Sovereign was the point of danger for English Protestantism. Religion was still regarded as mainly an affair for governments, and these were monarchical. James I. hankered after the exalted monarchism of the Continent, and his controversial interests disgusted him with the unscholarly polemics of the Puritans. He was bent on marrying his heir to a Roman Catholic princess, and was carried by his object into negotiations which affected the religious policy of the country. When the Spanish project failed, he turned to France. Henrietta Maria came to England with the hope and expectation of being able to wield a considerable influence in favour of her co-religionists. The conversion of monarchs and the subtle de-Protestantizing of churches were regular methods of the Jesuit crusade against the Reformation. In Poland, and later in Sweden, those methods were remarkably successful. There was fair cause for thinking that in England no less success might be anticipated. On the English side there was a natural desire to present the Church of England in the most favourable aspect to the foreign diplomatists. Points of agreement were magnified: points of difference were ignored, obscured, or explained away. This natural tendency coincided with the rapidly worsening relations between the

Anglicans and their Puritan neighbours within England itself. As Arminians, patristic students, anti-Sabbatarians, and sacerdotalists, the Laudians found themselves increasingly attracted to the Roman Catholics, who became more numerous and important in the Court of Henrietta Maria. They were anxious to make quite clear to the foreigners how distinctive was the Anglican system and how deeply they disapproved of the crude nudities of Protestantism. Yet there was no serious intention of abandoning the general platform of the Reformation save among a small section of fashionable folk, lay and clerical, who found the smile of the Court more persuasive than any formal arguments. Hacket, in his well-known life of Williams, the most versatile and enigmatic figure among the leading Anglican Churchmen of the time, gives a curious account of the pains which he took to impress the French favourably with the Anglican system. Williams, who combined the positions of Lord Keeper, Bishop of Lincoln, and Dean of Westminster, had entertained the French Mission, which had come to England to conclude the marriage negotiations, with anthems in Westminster Abbey. One of the company, a French Abbé, desired further information about the Church of England, and was invited to witness the service on Christmas Day. He was placed in the muniment-room,

where he could see everything without attracting notice, furnished with a copy of the Prayer-Book in French, and with an attendant to explain the service. Afterwards he was entertained at dinner in the College Hall, and, when the feast was over, he retired with the Dean into a gallery, and spoke freely on his impressions. He spoke with disgust of the falsehoods about English Christianity circulated on the Continent by the English Papists, and acknowledged frankly the reverence and dignity of the Holy Communion service which he had witnessed. "Though I deplore your schism from the Catholic Church," he said, "yet I should bear false witness if I did not confess that your decency, which I discerned at that holy duty, was very allowable in the consecrator and receivers." Williams expressed the hope that "he would think better of the religion for the future." "The better of the religion," echoed the Frenchman, supposing that the words related to the Reformed Church in France, "I will lose my head if you and our Huguenots are of one religion." "I protest, sir," was the reply, "you divide us without cause."\* Both the Frenchman's impression and the Bishop's disclaimer are extremely significant. The Church of England was drawing away from the other Reformed Churches, but it still retained a horror of the Papacy, which

\* Vide Hacket, *Life of Williams*, p. 210 f. (1693).

made the notion of essential difference from them repulsive. The "highest" Anglican would have been shocked and scandalized if the "Protestant" character of the Church of England had been questioned.

Reviewing the relations of England and Rome since the Reformation, we may perhaps usefully divide the history into four periods, severally distinguished as the periods of the struggle for independence, the Protestantizing of the Monarchy, the Protestant supremacy, and individual proselytizing. These descriptions are obviously not exclusive, but they serve roughly to indicate the prevailing character of the different times.

I. On February 11th, 1531, the Convocation of Canterbury acknowledged the Royal Supremacy in a formula which Archbishop Warham proposed: "We acknowledge His Majesty to be the singular Protector, only and supreme Lord, and, so far as the law of Christ allows, supreme Head of the English Church and clergy." In February, 1570, Pope Pius V. condemned and excommunicated Elizabeth. After enumerating the Queen's offences, the Pontiff proceeds:

"We therefore give sentence, we declare and decree that this alleged Queen of England has incurred the anathema of the greater excommunication, and the other pains and penalties of those who dare such deeds: we



disable and deprive her of her kingdom. We excommunicate, anathematize, deprive, and disable her: we summon all faithful Christians and issue letters accordingly: we absolve her people from their allegiance; as for her oath and her books, we extinguish them, and order every edition of them to be burned."

The Bull of deposition, *Regnans in excelsis*, followed immediately. It was the formal declaration of war between the Pope and the English nation in its civil and in its ecclesiastical aspect. Between 1532 and 1570 there was always a possibility that the breach created by Henry's quarrel would be healed, and the Papal Supremacy be restored over the island Church. With the Queen's excommunication this possibility vanished. If England was again to be restored to the Roman obedience, it would be effected by a crusade from without, or by treason from within, not by an agreement frankly negotiated with the national authorities and expressing the national will. Roman Catholics were stamped with the character of bad citizens, and entered on their long tribulation with their religious witness hopelessly entangled by political aspirations inconsistent with loyalty.

II. For a whole generation England was governed by an excommunicated Sovereign, whose life from day to day was threatened by the murderous fanaticisms of the Counter-Reformation. Elizabeth became the head of the Protestant

interest in Europe, and the Church of which she was "Supreme Governor" regarded itself, and was everywhere regarded, as the leading representative of Reformed Christianity. With the death of the great Queen, and the accession of the King of Scotland, the situation was changed. There was no longer any personal grievance obtruding itself between the Sovereign and the Papacy. The son of Mary, Queen of Scots, whom all the Catholic world regarded as a martyr, might well be thought to regard the Roman Church with a measure of sympathy, and James was peculiarly open to the personal appeals which the Roman emissaries knew so well how to frame. His dislike of the Puritans, his fondness for controversy, and his amiable ambition to play the peacemaker, inclined him to indulge the notion of a reconciliation with the Papacy; and though the Protestant feeling of the nation, raised to fever-heat by the Gunpowder Plot, made open negotiations wholly impossible, yet it is certain that he carried himself in such-wise that high expectations were raised in Rome. The Jesuits were busy in his Court. His Queen, Anne of Denmark, was strongly attracted to the Roman Church, and encouraged the hope that she would profess herself openly a Roman Catholic. On her deathbed she declared in response to an appeal from Archbishop Abbot that she "renounced

her own merits, and relied only upon her Saviour," and this somewhat vague declaration has been understood to mean that she was not actually a Roman Catholic, but she had steadily refused for years to receive the Sacrament from a Protestant minister, and had privately attended Mass and made her confession to the priests. Charles I. was a more sincere Anglican than his father, though a less learned theologian, but his Anglicanism was of the type then coming into prominence under the ardent patronage of Archbishop Laud, which had least sympathy with the Reformation, was associated in the popular mind with the absolutist tendencies of the royal policy, and was hardly intelligible to the religious public. Henrietta Maria was in every respect a more energetic and influential person than Anne of Denmark, and she came to England with the importance which belonged to the representative of a great Roman Catholic monarchy. The English Court became not only aggressively anti-Puritan, but also the centre of an active Roman propagandism. "The natural desire of the Catholics to spread their religious belief found support in the Queen. Her chapel in Somerset House was open to all who chose to visit it, and though restrictions were occasionally placed by the Government upon the access of visitors, she had always sufficient influence over her husband

to obtain their removal. The Capuchins who officiated in the chapel were unwearied in visiting the sick, and in carrying the consolations of their religion to those who accepted their ministrations, and their zeal was often rewarded by conversions from Protestantism." In their ardour to gain converts the Roman emissaries were not over-scrupulous. It is clear, says Dr. Gardiner, "that a large proportion of the conversions made were utterly worthless." This busy proselytizing would have been offensive enough in any case, but it did not stand alone. Along with it proceeded the policy of "Thorough" in Church and State.

"The real danger arose not from the Catholic clergy, but from the Government. Everywhere men were being taught that it was their duty to submit to the King. They saw practices and customs everywhere enjoined upon them of which they had known nothing before, and they began to suspect that some deeper motive was in existence than reached their ears. They knew that language which had been unheard in the reign of Elizabeth was freely used. The clergy talked of priests and altars, sometimes of auricular confession and of honours to be paid to saints. The inference—hasty it may be, but natural enough—was that there was a deep plot to wean the nation from its Protestantism."\*

One of the Queen's chaplains, Christopher Davenport, a Franciscan missionary better known

\* Gardiner, viii. 132, 133.



as Franciscus de Sancta Clara, was not content with the conversion of individuals but aspired to a reconciliation of the Churches. He was a man of learning, and acquired a considerable influence among the leading English ecclesiastics. Bishop Montague, the author of the *Appello Caesarem*, was among his acquaintances, and he was on intimate terms with the eccentric Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, who declared in his will that "no other Church hath salvation in it, but only so far as it concurs with the faith of the Church of Rome." Archbishop Laud himself aroused suspicion by his intercourse with Davenport, whom he was alleged to have protected and pensioned. In 1634 the Friar published an exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, which anticipated Tract XC. by attempting to prove that they are not essentially antagonistic to the Roman doctrine. This book was dedicated to Charles I., and, if not formally licensed in England, was freely circulated there, probably with the knowledge and approval of the Archbishop. "When the book was printed," writes Prynne, "this author presented not only the King, but the Archbishop himself with one of them, bound up in vellum, with the King's Arms on the cover, and blue silk strings." This volume was produced in evidence against the Archbishop at his trial. Tyranny in the State, sacerdotalism in

the Church, and both conspicuous at a juncture when the cause of Protestantism in Europe was in mortal danger of final overthrow, created the deepest anxiety in patriotic and religious Englishmen. It was widely felt that the enormous powers of the Royal Supremacy, by which the original breach with Rome had been effected, and the Reformation of Religion carried through, could not be safely vested in monarchs who might themselves be disloyal to the Protestant cause. The Church of England needed to be protected against its "Supreme Governor." No Act of the Long Parliament was more popular than that which abolished the Court of High Commission (1641). The tragic fate of Charles I. and Archbishop Laud, and the troubled period which followed, provoked a reaction which restored both Monarchy and Episcopacy, and seemed to bind Church and King together in an indissoluble alliance. But again the "Supreme Governor" failed the Church of England. The sons of the Royal Martyr did not share his devoted Anglicanism. A situation of the utmost peril, alike for the national liberties and for the Protestant faith, was disclosed when Charles II. was known to be in the pay of Louis XIV., and his brother, the heir to the throne, was seen to be a bigoted Papist. All the rage and terror of panic-stricken English Protestantism poured itself out in the miserable violence of the Popish Plot. So long

as Charles II. lived the crisis was postponed, but with the accession of his brother it developed rapidly. In face of James II.'s deliberate and sustained attempt to use the immense prerogatives of the Divine-right Monarchy in the interest of the Roman Church, religious Englishmen were carried into a striking contradiction of passionately held convictions. They were confronted by an evil choice. They had either to sacrifice their consistency or to jeopardize their religion, and naturally they preferred humiliation to apostasy. The Revolution was the formal negation of that perfervid loyalty which (to use the language of the *Syllabus Errorum* drawn up by the University of Oxford in 1683) was "the badge and character of the Church of England," and to act on the very principles which had been so solemnly pronounced "heretical and blasphemous, infamous to the Christian religion, and destructive of all government in Church and State." The Revolution, moreover, reaffirmed the essential Protestantism of the English Church. In face of aggressive Catholicism the alienating sophistries of controversy seemed to vanish, and the essential unity of Protestant religion became again apparent. The old fraternal language was once more heard on the lips of English Bishops. Archbishop Sancroft in 1688 issued to the Bishops of his Province an earnest admonition to bid their clergy "have a very tender

regard to our brethren, the Protestant Dissenters," and that they should "warmly and most affectionately exhort them to join with us in daily fervent prayer to the God of peace for an universal blessed union of all Reformed Churches both at home and abroad against our common enemies, and that all they who do confess the holy Name of our dear Lord, and do agree in the truth of His holy Word, may also meet in one holy Communion, and live in perfect unity and Godly love."\* The mere fact that the leader of European Protestantism now became the "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England reduced to absurdity the notion that the Church of England was other than, in the full sense of the word, a Protestant Church. For the second time the cause of English liberty and that of English Protestantism were seen to be identical, and in both cases the exercise of the Royal Supremacy had been the principal point of danger. The earlier episode had led to the crisis of the Great Rebellion and the violent destruction of the established system; the later led to the crisis of the Revolution and the definite Protestantizing of the Monarchy. There must be no recurrence of the perilous phenomenon of a Papist "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England. The language of the Bill of Rights (1688) is explicit and decisive:

\* Vide Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 618.



“And whereas it hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom, to be governed by a popish prince, or by any king or queen marrying a papist, the said Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, do further pray that it may be enacted, that all and every person and persons that is, are, or shall be reconciled to, or shall hold communion with, the see or Church of Rome, or shall profess the popish religion, or shall marry a papist, shall be excluded, and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the crown and government of this realm, and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging, or any part of the same, or to have, use, or exercise any regal power, authority, or jurisdiction within the same; and in all and every such case or cases the people of these realms shall be, and are hereby absolved of their allegiance; and the said crown and government shall from time to time descend to, and be enjoyed by such person or persons being Protestants as should have inherited and enjoyed the same in case the said person or persons so reconciled, holding communion, or professing, or marrying as aforesaid, were naturally dead.”

The Coronation Oath was now enlarged to its present form by the addition of a definite pledge to “maintain,” not only “the laws of God” and “the true profession of the Gospel,” but also “the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law.”

III. The Toleration Act (1689), which rewarded the Nonconformists for their patriotic attitude during the Revolution, was carefully

framed to exclude Roman Catholics from relief. Its professed object was to provide "some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion" as "an effectual means to unite Their Majesties' Protestant subjects in interest and affection." That the profession of the Roman Catholic religion and good citizenship were incompatible was the assumption of English statesmen and the firmly rooted belief of most Englishmen. Moral repugnance mingled with intellectual contempt and political suspicion in the English attitude towards the Roman Church. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) had renewed the association of "Popery" and persecution. Louis XIV. played at the end of the seventeenth century the sinister rôle which Philip II. had played in the middle of the sixteenth. In James II.'s reign England was filled with refugees from France bringing harrowing stories of barbarous cruelty. All the old embittering memories—"Bloody Mary's" persecutions, the attempts to assassinate Elizabeth, Gunpowder Plot, the Irish Massacre, the Popish Plot—were renewed, deepened, and confirmed. Rome, it was plain enough, was, as she boasted, *semper eadem*, always the unsleeping enemy of the truth, the cruel and crafty persecutor of Protestants. The historian notes with surprise that the Papacy, so far from urging forward the

persecuting Catholic sovereigns, was pursuing a policy of its own in opposition to theirs. The accession of Elizabeth and the expedition of William of Orange were not displeasing to the reigning Pontiff, to whose view the exorbitant power of Spain or France was a more formidable danger than the survival of heresy in England. Nevertheless the public conscience refused to distinguish between the Pope and his most conspicuous political representatives. Philip II. and Louis XIV. were, more truly than the reigning Pope, the symbols of the aggressive Catholicism directed by the Jesuits which would give no quarter to the Reformation. From 1688 to 1829—that is, from the expulsion of James II. to the Emancipation of the Catholics—the constitution of England was rigidly and exclusively Protestant. Roman Catholics, excluded from public life and subject to many legal disabilities, drew apart from the national life. The French Revolution created a revulsion of popular feeling in their favour, for the victims of the revolutionary tyranny took refuge in England and evoked much public sympathy. Yet the anti-Roman prejudice was so strong that Pitt was compelled to exclude Catholic emancipation from the Act which united England and Ireland, and when, in 1829, the enfranchisement was actually carried through Parliament, the disturbance of the public mind

was profound. For 140 years the Church of England was so completely isolated from the Church of Rome that even the profound theoretical divergence found little or no expression.

IV. Catholic Emancipation (1829) was quickly followed by the Reform Act (1832). These great measures inaugurated a long series of legislative changes, of which the effect was to destroy the elaborate structure of privilege which had been built round the ecclesiastical establishment. The Church of England, in the judgment of many of its devoutest members, was in imminent danger. Their distress and alarm found notable expression in the Oxford Movement, which revived (after the lapse of 130 years) the opinions of the Nonjurors. That movement, in the course of less than ninety years, has broken up the religious unity of the nation, effected a transformation in English Churchmanship, and brought the National Church to the verge of disruption. Its founders were originally true to the anti-papal tradition of their Church. It would be difficult to exceed the hostility to the Papacy which pervades the earlier Tracts. But the logic of their position was too strong for their inherited prejudices and carried them to conclusions which they had not contemplated. They were bent on reviving the medieval system, but of all the medieval institutions the most august and per-



vading was the Papacy; they were enamoured of Catholicism, but the type of religion which they drew from the Fathers was precisely that which the Anglican standards repudiated, and which found its modern expression in the Roman Church. The Church of England, as they imagined and described it, was seen to be strangely, almost grotesquely, unlike what in point of fact they knew it to be. "Apostolical Succession," the keystone of their ecclesiastical theory, was regarded with suspicion and dislike by the mass of English Churchmen, and received but a cold welcome from the English Bishops.

Thus all roads led to Rome, and the first phase of the Oxford Movement, when it was academic, learned, and logical, ended in the secession of Newman (1845) and some hundreds of his followers. One consequence of the movement was the rekindling of the ancient controversy which had slumbered for 150 years. The controversy was ancient, but the circumstances in which it had to be carried on were wholly novel. The Papacy no longer menaced the political independence of England, and statesmen no longer concerned themselves with its proselytizing efforts. Lord Russell's Ecclesiastical Titles Act (1851) was the last essay in anti-Roman legislation, and it could not retain its place on the statute-book for more than a few months. The

vehement anti-Roman prejudice which possessed English minds in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and had become an uncriticized tradition during the eighteenth, had waned, and was now for the most part confined to the less educated sections of the community. It was possible to consider the devotions and beliefs of the Roman Church on their merits, and when so considered they were found by many people very attractive. The Romantic movement which swept over Europe in the wake of the French Revolution had affected England also. Sir Walter Scott's genius had thrown a glamour over medieval life. Keble's *Christian Year* had led great numbers of English Churchmen to accept a religious habit which was certainly not Protestant. The Prayer-Book was read in the light of its medieval sources, not any longer in that of the official "confession." Even so, it was a very inadequate instrument for expressing the "Catholic" aspirations of the Tractarians, and they soon embarked on a bold course of illegality which has been crowned with so large a measure of success that, for all practical purposes, the Act of Uniformity has been abrogated, and the parish clergy determine for themselves the ceremonial and even the forms of service which they use in the churches. The decline of the middle class, which was the stronghold of Protestant

feeling, and the rapid rise to political ascendancy of the working classes, has facilitated this lawless tendency.

While thus the situation within England was changing to the great advantage of Catholicism, the Roman Church itself was altering. The religious reaction which followed the Revolution created a type of Churchmanship which had little hold of local traditions and little use for antiquity. A nearer and a stronger authority than that of Councils was plainly needed in a world which had witnessed the violent overthrow of the national churches, and was in tone and tendency increasingly secularist. The Papacy had weathered the storm, and emerged as the only factor in the ecclesiastical system which was strong enough to make head against the modern world. Accordingly, the nineteenth century witnessed the rapid growth of ultramontane theory and centralization. The Jesuit policy of aggrandizing the Papacy at the cost of the Episcopate, triumphed at the Vatican Council (1870), and the opposition, which at one time seemed very formidable, died away in nothing more serious than the small and futile secession of the "Old Catholics." At first view this dramatic victory might well appear very astonishing. On the old lines of controversy, accepted by both Anglicans and Romans in the sixteenth and seventeenth cen-

turies, the case against Rome had been greatly strengthened, for it was easy to prove, as von Döllinger and the minority in the Vatican Council proved to demonstration, that the new dogma of Papal Infallibility was in flagrant opposition to the teachings of the Fathers and the tradition of the undivided Church. But the old lines of controversy were being everywhere abandoned. Laudians, Gallicans, and Tractarians were not so much defeated as felt to be irrelevant. The theory of development applied to ecclesiastical history transformed the whole debate, and transformed it mainly to the advantage of the Roman Catholics. There was no value any longer in catenae of quotations from the Fathers, for these could disclose no more than an earlier and out-passed phase of faith and practice. The fuller and only obligatory version of either was that which actually confronted the Christian in his own time at the latest point in the continuing process of ecclesiastical development. Not precedents in the distant past could suffice to guide a living Church, but the Holy Ghost disclosing His Will in and through the Divine Society. The Protestant, shedding many prejudices, could still justify his religious position; and the Papist, shutting his eyes to much truth, could still make a bold controversial stand. But the Gallican and the Tractarian with their weight of patristic



learning, which had been the glory of their churches in an earlier time, found themselves helpless, unintelligible, and discarded. The controversial advantage of the Roman Catholics is not to be measured only by the number of individual conversions, though this is considerable and tends to increase, but also and more adequately by the change which has taken place in the disciples of the Tractarians. There is no longer any enthusiasm for the *via media*, and the old devotion to the Fathers has largely vanished. The anti-Roman note which prevailed in the Tracts is now rarely heard. The appeal to antiquity is only utilized in controversy with Protestants or with the less important advocates of Rome. The Papacy is referred to no longer as the "head and front" of the Roman offence, but with elaborate respect. Even the Infallibility dogma is not denounced, but discussed on the assumption that it is capable of an interpretation not inconsistent with Catholic truth. An ever-increasing emphasis is laid on the inherent patriarchal authority of the Roman Bishop, on the Divinely constituted supremacy of S. Peter's successor, on the necessity of such an international organization of the Church as the Papacy embodies. Along with this new attitude towards Rome there has developed an open contempt of Anglicanism, a disposition to belittle and even ridicule the

standards of the English Church, and an attitude of truculent disobedience to the established authorities. The services in many parishes have been closely approximated to those of the Church of Rome, and it has become quite common to hear the identity of Anglican and Roman belief boldly asserted. The term "Anglo-Roman" tends to replace the older term "Anglo-Catholic."

In 1894 a serious attempt was made to obtain from Rome a formal acknowledgment of the validity of Anglican Orders. Lord Halifax, the President of the English Church Union, had made the acquaintance of a liberal-minded Roman priest, the Abbé Portal, and had discussed with him the possibility of effecting a reconciliation between the Churches. The time seemed to be propitious for an essay in ecclesiastical peace-making, for the pontifical throne was occupied by a scholarly Pope with a reputation for liberal tendencies, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Benson, was a distinguished medievalist. The fact that Leo XIII. had bestowed a cardinal's hat on Dr. Newman was generally thought to indicate a desire to break away from the bigoted policy of his predecessor. Great efforts were made to induce the English Primate to make advances to the Roman Pontiff; but Lord Halifax, in his enthusiasm, underrated the caution of

Dr. Benson, and forgot his strong dislike of the papal theory. The Archbishop abstained from committing himself to negotiations which were foredoomed to failure, and, after much busy agitation both in Rome and in England, the whole venture miscarried. The Archbishop wrote to Lord Halifax (December 14th, 1894) somewhat sharply:

“ I must be pardoned for saying, what it is only the part of friendship to say, that I am afraid that you have lived for years so exclusively with one set of thinkers, and entered so entirely into the usages of one class of churches, that you have not before you the state of religious feeling and activity in England with the completeness with which anyone attempting to adjust the relations between Churches ought to have the phenomena of his own side clearly and minutely before him.”\*

In April, 1895, the Pope's Apostolic Letter, *Ad Anglos*, made its appearance. In this document Leo XIII. ignored the Church of England altogether, and addressed himself to the English nation as if it were wholly bereft of Christianity:

“ That the English race was in those days wholly devoted to this centre of Christian unity divinely constituted in the Roman Bishops, and that in the course of ages men of all ranks were bound to them by ties of loyalty, are facts too abundantly and plainly testified by the pages of history to admit of doubt or question. But, in the storms which devastated Catholicity throughout

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\* Vide *Life of Archbishop Benson*, vol. ii., p. 611.

Europe in the sixteenth century, England, too, received a grievous wound; *for it was first unhappily wrenched from Communion with the Apostolic See, and then was bereft of that holy faith in which for long centuries it had rejoiced and found liberty.*"

Two documents issued from the Vatican in the course of 1895—the Papal Encyclical, *Satis Cognitum*, on the Unity of the Church (June 29th), and the Bull *Apostolicae Curae* (September), declaring English Orders entirely null and void—disclosed sufficiently the unyielding character of the papal attitude. The Archbishop, addressing his Diocesan Conference in the summer of 1895, defined his own position towards the papal claims with sufficient lucidity:

"The Roman Communion had once in its bosom the whole of Western Christendom, but it proved itself incapable of retaining those nations. And now the representative of the Roman Communion had, in his desire for reunion, spoken to the English people as if they possessed no Church at all, apparently in total ignorance of the existence of any Church with any history or claims, and offered this reunion with a parade of methods of worship and of rewards of worship which was totally alien to the feelings of a nation which had become readers of the Bible, and who could never admit that such things had any attractions for them. They did not question the kindness which invited their common prayers; nor the sincerity of an appeal which was transparently sincere; but those two qualities only made more evident the inadequacy of the plea for unity which it contained. Its



acceptance would mean the bidding farewell on their part to all the Eastern Churches and to all the other reformed Churches of the race, and the setting aside of the Truth which had been gained by severe sacrifices, which was deeply cherished, and which they believed to be the necessary foundation of all unity. . . . *It was the duty of the laity as well as the Clergy to preserve in purity and loyalty the Faith and practices which characterized the Reformation* which had this peculiar mark—that nation and family and individual all had part in it.”

The papal condemnation of Anglican Orders was not left without answer. In February, 1897, appeared an elaborate *Answer of the Archbishops of England to the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII. on English Ordinations addressed to the whole body of Bishops of the Catholic Church*. It was signed by Archbishops Temple of Canterbury, and Maclagan of York. The Lambeth Conference met in July of the same year, and passed no resolution on the Pope's Bull, but the important Committee appointed to consider and report upon the subject of Church Unity adopted the words of the similar Committee of the Lambeth Conference of 1888:

“The Committee with deep regret felt that, under present conditions, it was useless to consider the question of Reunion with our brethren of the Roman Church, being painfully aware that any proposal for reunion would be entertained by the authorities of that Church only on conditions of a complete submission on our part

to those claims of absolute authority, and the acceptance of those other errors, both in doctrine and in discipline, against which, in faithfulness to God's Holy Word, and to the true principles of His Church, we have been for three centuries bound to protest."

Among those errors against which the Reformation was an emphatic protest, was not the conception of the Christian minister as "a sacrificing priest" one of the most notorious and baleful? Yet the Archbishops in their *Answer* appear to assume essential agreement between the Roman and Anglican Churches on the subject of the Christian Ministry.

That *Answer* is indeed a notable illustration of the effect of the Roman controversy on the Church of England. As a controversial rejoinder to the Pope's attack it is learned and effective, but as a formal declaration of Anglican doctrine it marks a startling departure from the historic position of the Reformed Church. Would the English Reformers, who compiled the Prayer-Book and the Ordinal, have accepted without demur the language of this document? Would the assumption that at bottom the English Church with respect to Orders stood with the Roman rather than with the Reformed Churches have been tolerable to Cranmer, Parker, Whitgift, Cosin, and Sheldon? They held the "Mass" to be "idolatrous," and they understood the

“sacrificial” character of the Roman priest in relation to the Mass. They did not deny the ministerial character of the Presbyterian clergy, nor refuse to receive the Holy Sacrament as ministered by them. Even the bitter enmities created by the Rebellion could not carry Anglicans into a repudiation of their essential agreement with the non-episcopal Protestants. Rome was, in Sancroft’s phrase, the “common enemy.” Protestants were “brethren.”

A specially significant indication of the true mind of Anglican Churchmen after the Restoration is provided by the practice of Denis Granville (1637–1703), Bishop Cosin’s son-in-law, who was Dean of Durham from 1684 to 1691, and then fled the country in order to join James II. in exile. He is said to have been nominated to the Archbishopric of York by the banished monarch. Turbulent and worldly, Granville was yet an ardent supporter of the Restoration settlement, and made himself conspicuous by his efforts to secure obedience to the new Prayer-Book. Among his papers, which have been published by the Surtees Society, are two of singular interest. The first is headed “Form used by Dean Granville when receiving private confessions, together with the questions used in the examination of the Penitent.” These questions are stated to “contain most of the important matters

in relation to such Confession as may qualify him to receive with profit and comfort the Absolution of the Church.” Here, then, if anywhere, we may expect to find the genuine mind of the author disclosed, for the document is strictly private, and cannot be influenced by any considerations of interest or policy :

“Do you believe the Church of Rome, as it is now established, an impure and corrupted Church, and their additions to the ancient faith, which the reformed Churches of Christ do reject, vain, idle, and superstitious ?

“*Ans.* I do.

“Do you believe the Reformed Churches of Christendom the Churches of Christ, and parts of the Holy Catholic Church, wherein the purest doctrine is professed, and the Sacraments of our Lord are most duly ministered, of any other Churches in the world ?

“*Ans.* I do.

“And are you satisfied that the Church of England is the most happily reformed one of all others ?

“*Ans.* I am so.

“Are you resolved (by the Grace of Almighty God) ever to own the Doctrine, Discipline, Order, and even Ceremonies of the same in all places, as far as you can without disturbing the peace, and breaking the union betwixt us and other Churches of Christ ?

“*Ans.* I am.”

Granville did but echo the belief of his father-in-law, Cosin, who may fairly be called the master



spirit in the liturgical revision of the Restoration. Neither of these men, nor any representative Anglican of that time, would have accorded with the tone and assumption of the Archbishops' *Answer*. The scornful allusion to "the Presbyterians and other innovators," against whom the alterations made in the Ordinal at the Restoration are said to have been directed, does but emphasize the assumption of the *Answer* that Rome and England are fundamentally agreed as to their doctrine of Orders, an assumption which the history of the Reformed Church decisively disallows. If "intention" can fairly be inferred from official action, then the English Reformers who carefully removed from the existing rites of Ordination and Consecration all the significant phrases and ceremonies which had implied the medieval conceptions of priesthood and sacrifice, could not have "intended" to perpetuate either; and if these conceptions be indeed, as the Romans maintain, integral to a right understanding of the Christian ministry, then there cannot be any such agreement between the Churches of England and Rome on the main question as the Archbishops in their *Answer* implicitly assumed, and the substantial justice of the Pope's decision cannot be successfully disputed, although, as the Archbishops showed, his argument in some points lay open to damaging criticism. The circum-

stance that many English Churchmen have abandoned the religious point of view of those who framed the English Ordinal, and have accustomed themselves to read into the confessional standards of the Church of England the very beliefs which those standards were intended to exclude, cannot alter the facts of history or properly affect the argument based on them. In controversy ecclesiastical combatants seem to exchange weapons, and, perhaps, no experience is so potent in shaking men's hold on distinctive beliefs as that of defending them. A considering student of Anglican history would assign an important place among the influences which have revolutionized Anglicanism to the long and still continuing controversy with Rome. For that controversy has drawn the champions of Anglicanism on to a ground where Protestantism, with its larger issues of faith and morality, has no place, and thereby a direction has been given to Anglican studies and interests which has carried English Churchmen ever farther from the common concerns of Reformed Christianity. The Roman controversy has deranged the perspectives of Anglicanism, and magnified into primary matters of religion those points of ecclesiastical organization and liturgical form which for the most part are essentially indifferent. At the end of nearly four centuries the most conspicuous spokesmen of

the Church of England are least in accord with its mind as disclosed in standards and traditions.

Another conclusion will force itself on the student's mind as he reflects on the conditions which determine the influence of rival churches on one another. Why should the Church of Ireland, confronted by the Roman Catholic Church, be stiffly Protestant, while the Church of England, ever engaged in controversy with the same Church, approximates rapidly to the Roman type? The answer lies in the fact that the great principle of repugnance is fear. In Ireland the Protestant minority has lived for centuries in chronic fear of the Roman Catholic majority. A similar fear reigned in the minds of English Churchmen for many generations, and bred a similar rigidity of Protestant religion. With the disappearance of fear has come also a weakening of the sentiments which it bred. Similarly in Scotland. So long as the Presbyterian Church perceived in Episcopacy a formidable power which endangered its security, it held everything distinctive of Episcopalian Christianity at arm's length; but with the final triumph of the Kirk the danger grew less and finally disappeared. To-day nothing is more apparent in Scotland than the rapid approximation of Presbyterian religion to the liturgical system of Episcopacy. The English Nonconformists illustrate the same fact

that fear is the great preservative of ecclesiastical distinctiveness. There are, of course, other forces—racial ascendancy, social prejudice, economic interest—but fear is perhaps of all alienating factors the most potent and subtle.



## LECTURE V

### EPISCOPACY

OF all the Reformed Churches only the Church of England and the Church of Sweden retained the Episcopate, but while in the case of the latter this circumstance has not affected its relations with the rest of the Protestant world, in the case of the former it has brought the island Church in the course of time into an almost complete isolation.

Both in Sweden and in England the Reformation was in the fullest sense a national act, effected by the national authority, and therefore preserving the framework of the medieval Church which had formed so important a part of the national system as to render organic change extremely difficult and repugnant. In both countries the ecclesiastical change enhanced the power of the national Monarchy, which succeeded to much of the authority which had belonged to the Papacy; but whereas in Sweden the national Church definitely adopted the Lutheran standard, and reckoned itself among the Lutheran Churches, in England, though there had been considerable

intimacy from time to time with the Calvinistic Churches of the Continent, the national Church took its own course, and retained a complete religious and ecclesiastical independence. Episcopacy became the distinctive mark of the Church of England, and its origin, value, and spiritual claim formed the subjects of interminable controversy.

Two factors were present in England which were without parallel in Sweden. The one was the prominent place held by Bishops in the Marian persecution; the other was the anti-episcopal agitation of the Presbyterians and sectaries. The first invested Episcopacy with a peculiar sanctity in English minds; the last compelled English Churchmen to state and emphasize the case for the ancient episcopal government of the Church as against its modern Presbyterian rival. When the influence of the political development is added, it is not difficult to understand why Episcopacy in England has had a history so different from that of Episcopacy in Sweden. The essential congruity of the episcopal polity in the Church with the monarchical polity in the State was a favourite theme of Anglican apologists from the first. Whitgift urged it against Cartwright; James I. stated it bluntly and even offensively to the Puritan ministers at the Hampton Court Conference. When the constitutional

conflict passed into the "Great Rebellion," and, to the horror of Europe, the Heads of the State and of the Church were brought to the scaffold, this commonplace of the apologists became an article of Anglican belief held with passionate conviction. The whole attitude of Anglicans towards non-episcopalian Protestants was coloured and shaped by this conviction. The circumstance that the Calvinists of Scotland, France, and Holland had steadily sympathized with the Puritans in England, and had been on the friendliest terms with the Governments of the Interregnum, pointed in the same direction. The connection of Church and Crown was exalted into a first principle of Anglicanism by the preachers and writers of the Restoration period. "King Charles the Martyr" is the only Saint formally added to the calendar by the Church of England. South, the most eloquent of the later Caroline divines, did not scruple to say that "the only thing that does now cement and confirm the Church of England is the blood of that blessed martyr." As late as 1710, Phipps, one of Sacheverell's counsel, argued thus:

"All learned men that understand our constitution have always agreed, that there is such a near relation between the Church and Monarchy, such a dependence of one upon the other, that where one falls, the other cannot stand."

The key to much that is distinctive in English religion must be sought in the sphere of secular politics. It would hardly be excessive to say that this is the case with the insistence on Episcopacy which has played so prominent a place in the history of Anglicanism.

Just before the outbreak of the Great War the Church of England was agitated by a controversy which raised the old issue of Episcopacy in a new setting. A conference of missionaries, representing diversely ordered Churches carrying on evangelistic work in East Africa, had met at Kikuyu, and agreed upon a *modus vivendi* which did beyond all question imply that non-episcopal ordinations and sacraments were not necessarily invalid, and might be fitly acknowledged and used by Anglicans in certain circumstances. This breach with the dominant tendencies of later Anglicanism provoked the vehement protest of the Bishop of Zanzibar. The controversy was transferred from Africa to England, where it waxed hot. In the pamphlets published on the one side or the other appeal was continually being made to the views of the older Anglican divines, whose authority was pleaded by all the combatants. It occurred to the Archbishop of Canterbury that some public advantage would result from a more careful and candid review of the evidence than the controversialists them-



selves would be likely to make. Accordingly Dr. Mason, Canon of Canterbury, well known as a learned writer on Anglican history, undertook the task, and in the summer of 1914 published the fruit of his labours in the volume entitled *The Church of England and Episcopacy*. In a short Preface the compiler admits frankly that his own convictions on the subject of Episcopacy are definite and strong, but that none the less he has done his work fairly:

“It has been my endeavour to show both sides of the question. I do not profess to be impartial. I am convinced that to tamper with episcopacy would be to throw away all that is most distinctive in the character and prospects of the Church of England. But I have desired to show fairly how matters have stood, and to bring out not only the earnestness with which our writers have contended for the apostolic and divine institution of episcopacy, but also their wish to make out the best possible case for those who had a different polity, while aiming in the main at promoting a scriptural and spiritual Christianity.”

The claim to impartiality cannot fairly be disputed. Dr. Mason has performed his laborious task with candour and thoroughness. He has brought all students of Anglicanism under a heavy obligation by placing in their hands a well-arranged catena of Anglican opinions on the subject of Episcopacy from the Reformation to

the present day. He has saved them an infinity of labour, and enabled them with little exertion to get a fair grasp of a curiously complicated subject.

“I believe,” he says, “that the passages here given represent accurately, and with sufficient fulness, the mind of the English Church from age to age, as seen both in its great scholars, its philosophical divines, its statesmen, and also in specimens of its average pastors, preachers, and teachers. The impression left is complex; but I think that no one who follows the evidence can doubt that the Church of England stands for episcopacy with a resolution peculiarly its own.”

If Dr. Mason's work is defective the fault does not lie with him. It is inherent in the method which perforce he adopted. A catena of opinions gathered from nearly 400 years may be representative and complete, and yet it may ignore—nay, must ignore—much that is really indispensable to a right understanding of the evidence it offers. The constantly changing background of circumstance, the sway of temporary motives, the pressure of specific situations, the effect of individual temperament and experience, the varying measures of knowledge, the subtle changes in emphasis and in the meaning of words—all these are perforce absent from the picture.

There are some broad considerations which should always be kept in the student's mind, since

they determine the actual significance of individual Anglican opinions until the nineteenth century was well advanced.

I. *Anglicans without exception regarded the Reformation as a mighty spiritual movement, bringing back to Christian knowledge the Gospel after a long obscuration, and setting mind and conscience free from a heavy and degrading spiritual bondage.* They drew a sharp dividing-line between reformed and unreformed Christianity, and held without doubt or hesitation that the Church of England professed the former. They gloried in the name of Protestant, and Protestantism to them did not merely mean the repudiation of the papal claims, but the rejection of that type of religion which they associated with the papal dominance. No true Anglican before the rise of the Tractarians would have objected to describe Anglicanism as Protestant. On the contrary, it was universally held that the Church of England was the pre-eminent representative and champion of "the Protestant religion," a famous phrase which still holds its place in the Coronation Oath of English monarchs. However sharply they might differ among themselves in non-essentials, all Protestants, as well Episcopalian as Presbyterian, stood together in the fundamentals of the Christian religion. They had a common enemy in the Church of Rome.

In 1681 the University of Cambridge described the Church of England as "the beauty and crown of the Reformation"; and the eloquent South allowed himself to speak of it as "the best and surest bulwark of Protestantism," "the only thing that makes Protestantism considerable in Christendom." Some grave words of Bramhall (*ob.* 1663) may serve to state the general view of English Churchmen before the Tractarians taught them another language:

"The Protestants do not attempt to make themselves a distinct body from the rest of the Christian world, much less do they arrogate to themselves alone the name of the true Church, as the Romanists do; but they content themselves to be part of the Catholic Church. That they have any differences among them either in doctrine or discipline, it is the fault of the Church of Rome, which would not give way to an uniform reformation of the Western Church; but that their controversies are neither so many, nor of any such moment, as he imagineth, the *Harmony of Confessions*, published in print, will demonstrate to all the world."

The essential unity of all Protestants was the assumption of Anglicans.

II. *In reading the Anglican divines it must always be remembered that they read both the Scriptures and the Fathers in a wholly uncritical spirit.* Historical method, as it is now understood and employed, was not yet discovered. The



criticism of texts was in its infancy. Much passed as genuine which has since been discovered to be false. Indeed, the large use of forged passages in the controversies of the time—a use in which the Roman advocates gained a disreputable prominence—was only rendered possible by the unquestioning faith with which for the most part the writings of ancient authors were received. Hardly less important is the fact that the Anglican divines were almost invariably controversialists. They stated their case as effectively as possible, and allowed nothing to their opponents. The circumstances which limited the application of sound arguments were generally ignored, and many arguments were used which were not sound. Pursuing their reasoning to its ultimate conclusions, they were relentless. The assertion that Episcopacy was a Divine institution could, and did, coexist with the practical recognition of non-episcopal Churches. The same theologian would maintain the necessity of Bishops, and feel himself bound in conscience to communicate with the Churches which had none. Cosin, when he drafted the short paper setting out in parallel columns the behaviour respectively of the French Protestants and the Roman Catholics towards the Anglican exiles, was pursuing a course which less learned and prominent Anglicans instinctively adopted for their own guidance. The witness of

experience outweighed the logic of the controversialists. Universally it was felt that the divergence which ought to determine the action of English Churchmen was not one of ecclesiastical order but of religious belief.

The "great divide" of Christendom was one of faith, not of organization. Two conceptions of Christ's religion were claiming Christian acceptance—that of the Reformers and that of the medieval Church—and the contrast between them was luridly emphasized by religious persecution. No English Churchman had the smallest doubt as to which of the two his Church expressed. After stating, perhaps over-boldly, that "the doctrine of the Apostolical Succession" has been "the standard teaching of the English Church" throughout its history "from Cranmer down to Lightfoot," Dr. Mason describes a practice which hardly accorded with that doctrine:

"The sending of commissioners to the synod of Dort was the act of the king, not of the church; but no record of protest is known, though the commissioners maintained an independent attitude at the time, and the Church of England accepted no responsibility afterwards for what was done at it. The encouragement given by high authorities to the work of John Dury among the foreign Protestants, the correspondence of Sharp and Wake with Jablonski and the Prussians, not to mention more private and personal expressions of goodwill, were signs that the Church of England, through her leading

men, felt that the cause of the foreign Protestants was in the main her cause.

“ So much was this the case that communion was freely practised on both sides—at least where the foreign churches permitted it. Saravia, while still in Holland, communicated when he could at the English service. Wake’s correspondence shows that numbers of French Protestants did the same in Paris. Saywell shows how foreign Protestants visiting England were admitted to communion here. In return, Cosin says that English churchmen were not forbidden to communicate in the congregations of foreign Protestants in England. He himself communicated with them abroad. But even Usher expressed hesitation about it. Probably men like Scudamore and Clarendon, Morley and Hickes, who definitely refused to do so, were a minority; but . . . the very fact that Cosin pleaded so vehemently that it was the right thing to do while others declined, is sufficient indication that there was no public, official, recognized intercommunion.”\*

It would, perhaps, be truer to say that intercommunion was so much taken for granted that a “ public, official, and recognized ” procedure was superfluous. No doubt there were scruples expressed and acted upon in the circle of Laudian Churchmen, but Laudian Churchmen were innovators on the normal practice of Anglicans. Clarendon himself comments on the novelty of Lord Scudamore’s action, when, as English ambassador in Paris, he withdrew from intercourse with the French Protestants, and “ was careful

\* Vide Mason, *loc. cit.*, p. 484.

to publish upon all occasions by himself and those who had the nearest relation to him, 'that the Church of England looked not on the Huguenots as a part of their communion.' "

Usher's theory of the Episcopate may have suggested scruples, but his sense of proportion dictated the sound rule which his conscience endorsed, and which beyond all question governed the practice of most Anglican Churchmen in that age:

"The agreement or disagreement in radical and fundamental doctrines, not the consonancy or dissonancy in the particular points of ecclesiastical government, is with me and I hope with every man that mindeth peace, the rule of adhering to or receding from the communion of any church."

Nor must it be forgotten that episcopalian theory was only occasionally brought to the test of action. The controversialist, writing in his study, could indulge in a rigorous logic, which ignored the salient factors of the religious situation; but the English Churchman, carried by the harsh pressure of the persecutor away from his native land, was in no doubt where he could seek and find fraternal recognition. Life corrected logic and rectified perspectives.

III. *The Anglican divines believed intensely in the ecclesiastical autonomy of the Christian State and the civic necessity of religious unifor-*



*mity.* The core of the Royal Supremacy was the right of the Christian nation to determine, within the limits of the Christian revelation, its own ecclesiastical system. Monarchy was the only type of civic government known to the ancient Christian Church: it was consecrated by the precedents of the Old Testament and the teachings of the New; it was practically—for the only exceptions were too petty in scale, or too recent in date, or too dubious in quality, to affect the general argument—the only type certified by the experience of mankind; it was bound into the whole process of the English Reformation so closely as to seem essential to it. This belief in the ecclesiastical autonomy of the Christian nation expressed in the supremacy of the monarch, who was held to have inherited the religious authority of the ancient Jewish kings and the almost unlimited ecclesiastical functions of the Christian emperors, both disallowed the pretensions of the Papacy and forbade the reforming essays of private individuals. The King, and none but the King, was the Divinely commissioned instrument by which a reformation of a national Church could be rightly undertaken. The position of the great foreign Reformers was always embarrassing to Anglicans, who could not fit them in to the theory which they advanced in defence of their own system. Generally they

fell back on the assumption of an extraordinary commission, similar to that of the Hebrew prophets, which might justify, in the actual state of Christendom, the anomalous proceedings of individuals. For themselves they stood stiffly on the inherent right of the Christian people exercised through the King as Christ's commissioned representative. As a Christian man the King was subject to the law of Christ, and this subjection undoubtedly implied limits on his reforming action; but, if he failed to do his duty, there was no recognized substitute who could undertake the work. Hooker set the law above the King. The law of the State must determine the method by which the King should exercise his authority, but the authority itself was inherent in his office. Usurpation from without, and individual action from within, the nation were alike ruled out by the Anglican doctrine of the Royal Supremacy. It followed that a distinction was drawn between the foreign Protestants and the domestic Dissenters. The former were acting within their rights; the latter were assuming rights which they did not possess. That both agreed on their religious policy was nothing to the point. The Church of England was not responsible for the action of foreigners; it was bound to secure peace within its own borders by exacting obedience from its own members. It was the very principle

of the English Reformation that every Christian nation should be free to order its religious system according to its own specific needs. This principle is stated in the Preface, "Of Ceremonies," which is placed in the forefront of the Book of Common Prayer as explaining the method observed by its compilers:

"And in these our doings we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe anything but to our own people only; for we think it convenient that every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best to the setting forth of God's honour and glory, and to the reducing of the people to a most perfect and godly living without error or superstition; and that they should put away other things, which from time to time they perceive to be most abused, as in men's ordinances it often chanceth diversely in divers countries."

It argues, therefore, no inconsistency on the part of English Churchmen that they acknowledged abroad what they suppressed at home. Dissenters might be right or wrong, but they were certainly revolted from the national system of religion, and as such they merited the punishment meted out to them by the laws of England. Bishop Davenant (*ob.* 1641) expressed the position with admirable clearness:

"It is lawful and useful for every particular church to exercise that jurisdiction over their own people, which in no case they ought or can usurp over the subjects of

another church. For if their own oppose the received doctrine of their church, established by public consent, they may (both for the errors they scatter, and for the disturbance they cause in the church) put them aside from the communion of their church so long till they leave off to infect others and trouble the church with their errors. But as soon as they repent of their errors, they are to be received again into the bosom of their mother. Thus may they deal with their own. But when they are to meddle with churches not at all subordinate unto them, they may hold divine concord and keep God's peace with those which think and teach otherwise than themselves, as we may see it in Cyprian."\*

More than seventy years later, when the Toleration Act had been on the statute-book for nearly twenty years, the same view was expressed by Joseph Bingham (*ob.* 1723), the learned author of *The Antiquities of the Christian Church*, when he appealed to the French Protestants, who had been taking refuge in England in considerable numbers since the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, not to become Dissenters, but to conform to the Established Church:

"For it is one grand principle in the French Church common to her with the Church of England, that every national church has power to appoint what indifferent rights and ceremonies she judges proper and expedient for her own edification: and that all the members of any such church are bound in conscience quietly and peaceably to submit to those her orders; and that they who

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\* Vide Mason, p. III.



raise contention about such things, and rather separate than comply with them, are guilty of a causeless separation. It is another principle naturally flowing from the former, that different rites in distinct national churches make no difference in the faith, nor ought to hinder the members of one church from joining in communion with another; but that everyone is bound to use the rites and ceremonies of that church with which he communicates, though they be different from his own. A Frenchman is bound to receive the Communion kneeling in the English Church, and an Englishman to receive it standing in the French Church, because these are the laws and customs of each communion.”\*

It could not, of course, escape notice that the Calvinistic Churches of the Continent were organized against the will of the national authorities. The Huguenot or the Dutch Protestant was as clearly a rebel against the government of his Sovereign as the English sectary. Apart from the Scandinavian Churches, which were reformed and organized by national authority, the Lutherans in Germany and elsewhere lay open to the same accusation. There can be no doubt that both Elizabeth and her immediate successors were acutely conscious of the paradoxical position which they held as supporters of religious dissent on the Continent and suppressors of dissent within their own dominions. But the necessities of national or dynastic policy triumphed over the

\* Vide *Works*, vol. ix. 299 (London, 1845).

logic of ecclesiastical theory. For the majority of English Christians, indeed, the paradox had no reality. In their view the true Churches of France, Holland, and Germany were represented, not by the ecclesiastical systems established by the national authorities, but by the persecuted minorities who, with whatever eccentricities of organization, professed the Gospel. An exception to the general attitude towards non-episcopal Churches was generally made during the seventeenth century in the case of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Scots, it was held, could not plead that their want of Bishops was involuntary, for they had deliberately and violently rejected Episcopacy after it had been restored to them by their Sovereign. Political resentment emphasized the distinction, for the Scots had not only led the war in the Great Rebellion, but had played the Judas by their Prince when in his extreme distress he had entrusted himself to their hands, selling him basely to his enemies for a price in money. Their attempt to impose the Presbyterian system on England was bitterly resented. In 1649—the very year of the King's execution—Bramhall published his *Fair Warning to take heed of the Scottish Discipline*. He insists that his denunciations of the Scottish Presbyterians implied no unkindness to the Continental Churches:

“I foresee that they will suggest that through their sides I seek to wound foreign churches. No: there is nothing which I shall convict them of here but I hope will be disavowed, though not by all protestant authors, yet by all the protestant churches in the world. . . . Before these unhappy troubles in England, all protestants, both Lutherans and Calvinists, did give unto the English Church the right hand of fellowship.”\*

If, then, these considerations be kept in mind—the general view of the Reformation common to all Anglicans, the uncritical method and controversial purpose of Anglican writers, the divergence between their theories of Episcopacy and their behaviour to the non-episcopal Churches, their exalted notion of the religious authority of the Christian State—the conclusion can hardly be avoided that, although Episcopacy was jealously guarded as a precious part of the Anglican heritage, it was not, until quite recent times, elevated into the very *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*.

The modern phase of the history of Anglican Episcopacy begins with the publication of the first of the famous series of Oxford Tracts in the year 1833. It is headed *Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission respectfully addressed to the Clergy*, and is written in a tone of apprehensive urgency. Disestablishment and Disendowment are threatened, and may be imminent. If the disaster

\* Vide Mason, p. 213.

befalls the Church, what title to audience and respect will be left to the clergy? Will they not sink into the depressed position and ignominious dependence of the dissenting ministers?

“Christ has not left His Church without claim of its own upon the attention of men. Surely not. Hard Master He cannot be, to bid us oppose the world, yet give us no credentials for so doing. There are some who rest their divine mission on their own unsupported assertion; others, who rest it upon their popularity; others on their success; and others, who rest it upon their temporal distinctions. This last case has, perhaps, been too much our own; I fear we have neglected the real ground on which our authority is built—*our Apostolical descent*.

“We have been born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of *God*. The *Lord Jesus Christ* gave His Spirit to His Apostles: they in turn laid their hands on those who should succeed them; and these again on others; and so the sacred gift has been handed down to our present Bishops, who have appointed us as their assistants, and in some sense representatives.”

After quoting the language of the Ordinal, the author proceeds to enquire what is the origin of the Bishop's ordaining power:

“He could not give what he had never received. It is plain then that he but *transmits*; and that the Christian Ministry is a *succession*. And if we trace back the power of ordination from hand to hand, of course we shall come to the Apostles at last. We know we do as a plain



historical fact; and therefore all we, who have been ordained Clergy, in the very form of our ordination acknowledged the doctrine of the *Apostolical succession*.

“And for the same reason, we must necessarily consider none to be *really* ordained who have not *thus* been ordained. For if ordination is a divine ordinance, it must be necessary, and if it is not a divine ordinance, how dare we use it? Therefore all who use it, all of *us*, must consider it necessary. As well might we pretend the Sacraments are not necessary to Salvation, while we make use of the offices of the Liturgy; for when God appoints means of grace, they are *the* means.

“I do not see how anyone can escape from this plain view of the subject, except (as I have already hinted), by declaring that words do not mean all that they say.”

The Tract concludes with a fervent appeal to the clergy boldly to profess their belief, or, at least, to “choose their side”:

“A notion has gone abroad that they (*i.e.*, the people) can take away your power. They think they have given and can take it away. They think it lies in the Church property, and they know that they have politically the power to confiscate that property. They have been deluded into a notion that present palpable usefulness, produceable results, acceptableness to your flocks, that these and such like are the tests of your Divine commission. Enlighten them in this manner. Exalt our holy Fathers, the Bishops, as the Representatives of the Apostles, and the Angels of the Churches; and magnify your office, as being ordained by them to take part in the Ministry.

“ But, if you will not adopt my view of the subject, which I offer to you, not doubtingly, yet (I hope) respectfully, at all events, *choose your side*. To remain neuter much longer will be itself to take a part. *Choose your side*; since side you shortly must, with one or other party, even though you do nothing. Fear to be of those, whose line is decided for them by chance circumstances, and who may perchance find themselves with the enemies of Christ, while they think but to remove themselves from worldly politics. Such abstinence is impossible in troublous times. ‘ *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.* ’ ”

Such language was without precedent, and the religious attitude which it disclosed was not to be reconciled either with the principles of the Reformation or with the standards of the Established Church of England. It had not been in this way that the great Anglicans of the past had thought of the nation, or of the ministry, or of the Christian Church. They had seen everything in a different perspective, and judged everything in a larger spirit. This first Tract struck a note which was sustained throughout the whole of the Tracts that followed. In the fourth of the series the argument is repeated and developed. The telling but delusive antithesis between the Establishment and the Apostolical Succession was again insisted upon:

“ Why should we talk so much of an *establishment*, and so little of an *apostolical succession*? Why should we

not seriously endeavour to impress our people with this plain truth: that by separating themselves from our communion, they separate themselves not only from a decent, orderly, useful society, but from *the only Church in this realm which has a right to be quite sure that she has the Lord's Body to give to His people.*"

The author anticipates the objection, "sure to be presently and confidently asked," whether such insistence on Apostolical Succession did not "unchurch the Presbyterians, all Christians, who have no bishops." He replies:

"To us such questions are abstract, not practical: and whether we can answer them or no, it is our business to keep fast hold of the Church Apostolical, whereof we are actual members; not merely on civil or ecclesiastical grounds, but from real personal love and reverence, affectionate reverence to our Lord and only Saviour. And let men seriously bear in mind, that it is one thing to slight and disparage this holy succession where it may be had, and another thing to acquiesce in the want of it, where it is (*if it be anywhere*) really unattainable."

Dr. Mason is at some pains to maintain "that a belief in the Divine institution of Episcopacy was no invention of the Oxford Movement," and so much may be admitted, but it is not less the case that the belief had long fallen out of the scheme of Anglican religion, in which it survived rather as an interesting archaism than as a living conviction. The Tract writers laboured, not

unsuccessfully, to justify their doctrine by elaborate catenae of Anglican divines, but they could not restore the atmosphere of the earlier time nor bring back the circumstances which then had excused and explained the intolerance of Christian men. Dr. Mason himself admits that there was a difference, but he belittles its extent, and misconceives its character. Indeed, he seems more anxious to retort the charge of novelty on the opponents of the Tractarians than to explain the measure in which it can justly be advanced against the Tractarians themselves:

“There was nothing new in the Tractarian insistence upon the apostolical succession. What was to a certain extent new was on the one hand the rigid aloofness with which the Tractarians regarded the foreign churches which were without it, and on the other hand the passionate scorn with which the doctrine was repudiated by partisans of the opposing school. Of these two novelties the second, if the expression may be allowed, was the newer.”\*

At least it must be admitted that the doctrine of Apostolical Succession had never before been thus nakedly pressed on English Churchmen. Never before had Episcopacy been represented as not merely in itself excellent and uniquely authoritative because descending from the Apostolic age, but also as something which severed Anglicans from all fellowship with the Churches

\* Vide Mason, p. 449.



of the Reformation, and bound them in a real, though wholly inoperative and unacknowledged, unity with the unreformed Churches of Rome and the East.

Newman himself was the author of no less than twenty-nine of the ninety Tracts, and at that stage in his career the Roman Church was hardly less odious to him than the non-episcopal Protestants. The logical impossibility of his position, however, could not be long concealed from a mind so acute and relentless. He has himself related with inimitable literary skill the history of his passage out of the Church of England into the Church of Rome. In the process, however, he had given utterance to ideas which have persisted, and in both Churches found expression in modes which he could not have anticipated, and would certainly have disapproved. The "Anglo-Catholics" of the one Church and the "Modernists" of the other may trace their lineage to him. The doctrine of Apostolical Succession, which in its crudest form he had announced to a startled Church, still holds its place in popular manuals and in the teaching of theological colleges. It has coloured the sermons of many parish clergy, and has embittered the relations of Anglicans and Nonconformists throughout the country. But it could not be unaffected by the general acceptance of the theory of develop-

ment which Newman himself had advanced in the interest of the Papacy, but which lent itself to other and larger applications. The advance of critical and historical science has destroyed the presuppositions of the traditional belief. Who could now treat seriously the claim (which figures so prominently in the pages of the older champions of Anglicanism) that the Bishops and priests represent severally the Apostles and the Seventy, perpetuating in the Church an "imparity of ministers" ordained by Christ Himself? The origins of Episcopacy began to be investigated in a new spirit. Not some polemical interest governed the student's mind, but a candid desire to discover the truth. The discussion was no longer limited to a few passages from the New Testament and the patristic literature of the undivided Church of antiquity. It drew into its range a mass of new knowledge, and employed on its waxing materials the new "weapons of precision" which the scholars of Europe had gradually acquired and perfected. The protracted and embittered discussions which preceded, accompanied, and followed the Vatican Council forced the Christian ministry under review, and stimulated enquiry into its beginnings, its character, and its development.

In 1868 Dr. Lightfoot, afterwards Bishop of Durham, published an edition of S. Paul's Epistle

to the Philippians, and appended to it a Dissertation on "The Christian Ministry." This learned and lucid essay marks a stage in the history of Anglican belief about Episcopacy. Written in a tone of reverent caution, and disclosing that completeness and *finish* which marked all Dr. Lightfoot's work, the conclusions at which the learned author arrived were definitely unfavourable to the traditional view. In spite of the large, perhaps too large, estimate of the claim which Episcopacy can advance to the acceptance of modern Christians, the essay abandons the old claims of Divine institution and Apostolical appointment, and presents the Episcopate as the result of a process of development. "The Episcopate was created out of the Presbytery," and "this creation was not so much an isolated act as a progressive development, not advancing everywhere at a uniform rate, but exhibiting at one and the same time different stages of growth in different churches." While thus "the Episcopate was formed, not out of the apostolic order by localization but out of the presbyteral by elevation," the conception of the ministry was shaped by influences which were not properly Christian. "By the union of Gentile sentiment with the ordinances of the Old Dispensation, the doctrine of an exclusive priesthood found its way into the Church of Christ." In this theoretical develop-

ment Bishop Lightfoot gave decisive importance to the influence of Cyprian :

“ It is not only that he uses the terms *sacerdos*, *sacerdotium*, *sacerdotalis*, of the ministry with a frequency hitherto without parallel. But he treats all the passages in the Old Testament which refer to the privileges, the sanctions, the duties, and the responsibilities of the Aaronic priesthood, as applying to the officers of the Christian Church. . . . As Cyprian crowned the edifice of episcopal power, so also was he the first to put forward without relief or disguise these sacerdotal assumptions; and so uncompromising was the tone in which he asserted them, that nothing was left to his successors but to enforce his principles and reiterate his language.”\*

It is not unworthy of notice that Cyprian was a favourite authority with Anglican controversialists. His exalted Episcopalianism was invaluable against the Presbyterians, while his vehement language against the Pope's assumptions made him no less serviceable against the Papists. His comparatively early date added weight to his testimony. Thus the name of Cyprian appears so frequently in the pages of the Anglican writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that he may not unsuitably be entitled the “ Anglican Father.” Lightfoot's Dissertation caused alarm and even consternation in some Anglican circles. He seemed, says Dr. Mason, to “ give away the case for Episcopacy ” as it had been maintained

\* Vide Dissertation, p. 258, in *Philippians*, 1879.



by the Anglican champions of the past. Lightfoot, while asserting that he had been largely misunderstood, declined to withdraw, or alter, his Dissertation. In the Preface to the sixth edition of his *Commentary*, published in 1881, he wrote:

“While disclaiming any change in my opinions, I desire equally to disclaim the representations of those opinions which have been put forward in some quarters. The object of the essay was an investigation into the origin of the Christian ministry. The result has been a confirmation of the statement in the English ordinal, ‘It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy scripture and ancient authors that from the apostles’ time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ’s church—bishops, priests, and deacons.’ But I was scrupulously anxious not to overstate the evidence in any case; and it would seem that partial and qualifying statements, prompted by this anxiety, have assumed undue proportions in the minds of some readers, who have emphasized them to the neglect of the general drift of the essay.”

That “general drift,” however, was really unmistakable, and both sides in the episcopalian controversy perceived it alike, the one with satisfaction, the other with discontent and dismay. In 1889 Dr. Gore, at that time the leader of the younger school of High Churchmen, published his *The Ministry of the Christian Church*, which was a learned and ingenious attempt to reaffirm the positions which Dr. Lightfoot had demolished.

To this volume the author appended a long note on the latter's famous Dissertation.

In 1901 appeared Bishop John Wordsworth's *The Ministry of Grace*, a book full of curious learning, which drew a distinction, now generally abandoned by scholars, between "charismatic" and other ministries in the earliest Church. In the main Lightfoot's view of the origin of the Episcopate was reaffirmed. The gist of the argument is thus stated in the Preface:

"As regards the Ministry, as we know it in practice, the conclusions reached are rather tentative than absolute. They point to a primitive origin for the regular ministry of the word and sacraments, but to an uneven rate of development in its component orders, and to a longer duration of the charismatic ministry in some regions than in others, as well as to the persistence of the latter as a 'reserve force' latent in the Episcopate. As regards the Episcopate the facts here stated indicate a general tendency to a monarchical regimen, while they show that it was not everywhere set up in exactly the same form or at the same date. The practical conclusions must surely be: (1) that while some form of regular ministry is always necessary, it need not exclude a charismatic ministry; and (2) that while Episcopacy must be a marked feature of the Church of the future, it need not everywhere have exactly the same relation to the Presbyterate."

Interest in the Christian ministry was stimulated by the movement towards "Reunion,"

which, as the nineteenth century drew to its close, gathered volume in every direction. In 1888 the Lambeth Conference had put forth four propositions as together supplying "a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made towards Home Reunion." The fourth of these ran thus:

"The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church."

So soon, however, as attempts were made to negotiate with the representatives of non-episcopal Churches on the basis of the Lambeth propositions—which soon came to be known as the "Quadrilateral"—it was found that the claim of the "Historic Episcopate" to universal acceptance became an insurmountable stumbling-block. In spite of the care with which that claim had been phrased, it was generally interpreted as implying the "invalidity" of non-episcopal ordinations, and of the sacraments celebrated by ministers who had not been episcopally ordained. The deadlock that resulted was lamented and resented by all who realized the imperative necessity of uniting the Churches, and a demand for fresh and more searching investigation into the origin and significance of Episcopacy became audible in many quarters. This demand was

publicly expressed in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge on January 30th, 1910, by Dr. J. M. Wilson, Canon of Worcester. He appealed for a fresh examination of the questions which "gather round the origin and early development of Episcopacy, and the nature and degree of the sanction which it possesses." In response to this appeal the Archbishop of Canterbury "expressed the opinion that it would be opportune to collect and state in as precise a form as possible the latest results of scholarly research bearing on the subject." Dr. Swete, the Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, undertook the work. He has stated his method in the Preface to the volume in which the results of his effort were disclosed:

"Such a desire, coming from the Archbishop, had the force of a command. It could best be fulfilled, as I thought, in a series of Essays written by representative scholars, whose names would be a guarantee for breadth of knowledge and accuracy in detail; and an effort was made—successfully, so I rejoice to say—to secure the services of well-known theologians from each of our older Universities."

The volume thus designed appeared in 1918 under the title, *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry by various Writers, edited by H. B. Swete, D.D.* On the title-page it bore the significant words of S. Augus-



tine: "In necessariis unitas; in non necessariis libertas; in utrisque caritas." Of the six essays, the longest, most elaborate, and most important was that on "Apostolic Succession" by Cuthbert Hamilton Turner, well known as a learned student of Christian history. The subject of his enquiry is thus stated:

"It is the business of the present enquiry to examine the origin and purpose of this emphasis on Apostolic Succession, to fix its exact meaning in the minds of those who first phrased it, and to trace the modifications which the idea underwent during the patristic period—that is, in particular between S. Irenaeus and S. Augustine. When people talk nowadays of Apostolic Succession, it may almost be taken for granted that they mean (whether they are aware of it or not) the doctrine of the Succession in the form in which it is deduced from the great conception of the Christian Ministry and the Christian Sacraments, their 'validity' and their 'regularity' which was first worked out in S. Augustine's contributions to the Donatist controversy. But behind the coherent and systematic theory which we may for convenience call 'Augustinian,' the doctrine of the Succession had had a history of two centuries; and more and the development of ideas which, during the third and fourth centuries, altered the attitude of Western theologians toward the mutual relations of the Church and the Sacraments, could not fail to bring with it in the end some corresponding change in the meaning attached to Apostolic Succession as a necessary qualification of the Christian Ministry. Our primary concern here is with the doctrine not in its

ultimate but in its earliest stage, as it was first formulated and asserted in the course of the controversy with Gnosticism.”\*

Dr. Lightfoot had shown that the traditional view of Episcopacy as an Apostolical institution must be revised in deference to the fact that it had been developed from the Presbyterate. Dr. Turner showed that the traditional view of Apostolic Succession was not primitive, but grew out of controversy in the fourth century. In neither case did the new theory necessarily prohibit the traditional view, but in both the traditional view was mitigated and stripped of its binding authority over religious minds. It became a “pious opinion,” not a dogma. Dr. Gore has published a new edition of his *Church and the Ministry*, carefully revised by Dr. Turner (who himself adheres to the view which as an historian he has analyzed with such effect), but the argument does not appear to command acceptance outside the party which subordinates historical judgments to dogmatic requirements. The latest Anglican book on the subject—*The Doctrine of the Church and Christian Reunion, being the Bampton Lectures for the year 1920, by the Rev. Arthur C. Headlam, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford*—reaffirms the positions of Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Turner with learning, decision, and

\* Vide *Essays*, p. 95.

lucidity. After reviewing the evidence, the Professor reaches the conclusion that Episcopacy is an ecclesiastical creation neither ordained by Christ nor appointed by His Apostles:

“Episcopacy, like all other Church customs, had its roots in Apostolic times; but Episcopacy, as it existed in later days, was not the direct result of Apostolic action, but was the creation of the Church, which gradually moulded its institutions to fit the altered needs of the times.”\*

“It [Episcopacy] had its origin in the Apostolic Church; it represents a continuous development from Apostolic times; but we cannot claim that it has Apostolic authority behind it. We must recognize that we cannot claim such authority for any Christian institution or teaching unless there is the clear and certain evidence of documents coming from the time of the Apostles, and we cannot believe that our Lord could have intended that any institution should be looked upon as essential to the existence of the Church without giving explicit and certain directions. He instituted the Eucharist and gave a command about Baptism, but He did not directly institute or command Episcopacy. We cannot claim that it is essential to the Church. Equally it is clear that there is no Apostolic ordinance to be quoted in its support. There is no adequate or sufficient evidence that it was instituted by Apostles. We must recognize that the authority that can be claimed for it is so far limited.

“But having said that, we can justly and rightly maintain that it comes to us with the authority of the Church of the earliest and all subsequent centuries; that

it is the direct and natural development of Apostolic institutions and the principles laid down by our Lord; that the Church, as a living organism, built up for itself a strong and effective instrument by which it might fulfil its mission, and maintain and pass on to future generations the divine word and life with which it had been entrusted.”\*

“The Apostles as the first rulers of the Church gradually built up a ministry adapted to the conditions of the times, but they gave no directions that have been preserved for us in any trustworthy or authoritative manner as to what should be the form of the society, and, as a matter of fact, after they passed away we find the Church ruled over by officers different from those that had existed in the Apostolic Church as it is presented to us, although doubtless linked to it by a close organic connection.

“Now, the only deduction we can make from this is that while it was clearly intended that the Church should possess a properly organized ministry, it was not intended that any particular form should be essential. The Church should freely create its own ministry, and might presumably also change at some future time what it had itself created, or adapt it to new conditions. We cannot therefore say that any form is essential to entitle it to be called a church, nor are we entitled to say that any particular Christian society has no claim to be considered a part of the Church because it has not a particular form of ministry.”†

Dr. Headlam personally refrains from the inference that might seem to follow naturally

\* P. 105.

† P. 242.



from such a view of Episcopacy. He allows "that the Anglican Church has exaggerated Episcopacy," but holds that, when the exaggerations have been pruned away, the institution itself remains the indispensable form of the Christian Ministry in a united Church. This also would seem to be the opinion of the Lambeth Conference as expressed in the *Appeal to all Christian People*, which forms the most notable feature of its recent proceedings.

The actual position of the English Bishop hardly reflects the theory of Episcopacy which Anglicans have generally asserted. It does not correspond with the primitive, still less with the Apostolic model, save in the point of superiority in the hierarchy and in ordination. The reason is sufficiently obvious. The English Bishop succeeded to, and to some extent has perpetuated, the position of the medieval prelate. The vast extent of the English diocese, which seemed to the religious Puritan destructive of the whole idea of responsible pastoral ministry, and the intimate association of the English Bishop with secular affairs, which presents him in so many incongruous, and even invidious, situations, were distinctive features of English Episcopacy as it existed on the eve of the Reformation, and were taken over as a matter of course by the Reformed Church. Its intimate association with politics

has often been a snare to the English Episcopate. Episcopal appointments have been regarded as a means of strengthening a feeble monarchy, or, still worse, as opportunities for purchasing support for a government. The party system told with disastrous effect on the working of the Royal Supremacy. Since the definite triumph of democracy there has been a cessation of the scandals which once disgraced the administration of the Crown patronage, but the memory of former evils lingers, and sustains in the popular mind a feeling of resentful suspicion, which undoubtedly tends to weaken the rightful influence of the Episcopal Bench.

Within the Anglican Communion at the present time three views of Episcopacy are maintained and advocated. First, there are those who, ignoring or explaining away the facts of early Christianity as now certified by historical science, still maintain the Divine institution and Apostolical appointment of the Episcopate, and hold the doctrine of Apostolical Succession in its most rigorous and exclusive form. These are, though numerous, represented in the ranks of the parish clergy, declining in number and importance. Next, there is the great multitude, including probably the majority of the Bishops, which maintains, with the Preface to the Ordinal, that Episcopacy has continued in the Church since the

time of the Apostles, that it probably originated in Apostolic appointment, that it carries the prestige and authority of universal acceptance in the undivided Church of the early centuries, and that, although not an essential of the Christian religion, it certainly belongs to the *bene esse* of the visible Church.

Lastly, there is an increasing number of Anglicans, including the majority of historical students, who cannot reconcile the traditional insistence on a specific form of ecclesiastical organization with the spiritual character of Christ's religion, and who refuse to regard questions of polity as of primary importance. They regard Episcopacy as one among the many types of ecclesiastical organization which Christianity has developed in the course of its history, the oldest, most elastic, and most widely extended, and therefore probably the most efficient, but having no other title to the acceptance of Christians than its proved serviceableness for the purposes of every system of ecclesiastical government—viz., the edification of the Church and the evangelization of the world.

## LECTURE VI

### THE ESTABLISHMENT

THE Church of England holds in the Anglican Communion a singular position as being alone—save for a partial exception in India—an established Church. At one time the Colonial Churches also were established, but, as self-government reached maturity in the Colonies, the ecclesiastical establishments have been everywhere abandoned, and the State has taken a merely secular character, extending legal protection to all religious bodies, and regarding them in a friendly spirit, but maintaining towards religion a rigid and jealously guarded neutrality. Even in Great Britain disestablishment and disendowment have long been articles of the political creed of a powerful political party. On this policy at least Liberals and “Labour” are at one. In 1870 the Church of Ireland was disestablished, and in 1920 the four Welsh dioceses were separated from the Province of Canterbury, with which they had been organically united for many centuries, disestablished, and partially disendowed. The Church of England, thus reduced in scale



by the loss of the Welsh bishopricks, still remains an established Church, but few students of English politics doubt that the complete secularization of the State cannot be much longer postponed. The principal question that now engages the thought both of politicians and of Churchmen no longer refers to the policy itself, but only to the conditions under which it should be carried through, and the spirit in which so great a revolution in the ecclesiastical and social life of England should be accomplished. It is, however, proverbial in English politics that "threatened institutions live long." The downfall of the national establishment of religion has often before seemed imminent. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Butler, the greatest Churchman of the time, is related to have declined nomination to the Primacy because in his judgment "it was too late to save a falling Church." Good judges decided that the Church could not survive the storms of the Reform Bill agitation. It may well be the case that the danger which now threatens the establishment may again pass, and that the ancient union of Church and State in England may yet have a long career of beneficent activity before it. In any case, a study of Anglicanism can hardly omit some consideration of the theory and working of the establishment, as it now exists.

The classical statement of the Anglican theory of Church and State is contained in the eighth book of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which, though published posthumously and evidently without the final revision of the author, may be accepted as substantially his work. The book is concerned with the Puritan contention "that unto no civil prince or governor there may be given such power of ecclesiastical dominion as by the laws of this land belongeth unto the supreme regent thereof." It is divided into nine sections, which indicate in their titles the range of the discussion. They are the following:

I. State of the Question between the Church of England and its Opponents regarding the King's Supremacy.

II. Principles on which the King's modified Supremacy is grounded.

III. Warrant for it in the Jewish Dispensation.

IV. Vindication of the Title, Supreme Head of the Church within his own Dominions.

V. Vindication of the Prerogative regarding Church Assemblies.

VI. Vindication of the Prerogative regarding Church Legislation.

VII. Vindication of the Prerogative regarding Nomination of Bishops.

VIII. Vindication of the Prerogative regarding Ecclesiastical Courts.

IX. Vindication of the Prerogative regarding Exemption from Excommunication.

Hooker, following the Articles and Canons, builds much on the Jewish precedent recorded in the Old Testament, and that part of his argument hardly appeals to modern minds; but he is not content with a Biblical case for the English system. He offers justifications in reason and experience, which retain validity still. His refusal to accept the sharp distinction which the Puritans drew between Church and Commonwealth goes to the root of the case for Establishment:

“In their opinions the church and the commonwealth are corporations, not distinguished only in nature and definition, but in substance perpetually severed; so that they which are of the one can neither appoint nor execute in whole nor in part the duties which belong to them which are of the other, without open breach of the law of God, which hath divided them, and doth require that, being so divided, they should distinctly and severally work, as depending both upon God, and not hanging one upon the other's approbation for that which either hath to do.

“We say that the care of religion, being common unto all societies politic, such societies as do embrace the true religion have the name of the Church given unto every of them for distinction from the rest; so that every body politic hath some religion, but the Church that religion which is only true. *Truth* of religion is that proper difference whereby a church is distinguished from other politic societies of men. . . .

“With us, therefore, the name of a church importeth only a society of men, first united into some public form of regiment, and secondly distinguished from other societies by the exercise of Christian religion. With them on the other side the name of the Church in this present question importeth not only a multitude of men so united and so distinguished, but also further the same divided necessarily and perpetually from the body of the commonwealth: so that even in such politic society as consisteth of none but Christians, yet the Church of Christ and the commonwealth are two corporations, independently each subsisting by itself.”\*

The Christian nation is identical with a Christian Church—that is Hooker’s fundamental assumption. His theory found expression in the actually existing system of Elizabeth’s government, which indeed may be assumed to have suggested it. He states with some care the limits of the Sovereign’s supremacy, and the conditions of its rightful exercise. The King’s power, he says, must be used “for the received laws and liberty of the Church,” not against them. Moreover, just as in civil affairs the King must do nothing “in prejudice of those ancient laws of nations which are of force throughout the world,” so in ecclesiastical government he must respect the traditions of Christendom:

“In principal matters belonging to Christian religion, a thing very scandalous and offensive it must needs be

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\* Vide *Works*, vol. iii., pt. i., pp. 410, 411 (Oxford, 1836).



thought, if either kings or laws should dispose of the affairs of God, without any respect had to that which of old hath been reverently thought of throughout the world, and wherein there is no law of God which forceth us to swerve from the way wherein so many and so holy ages have gone.”\*

After illustrating his argument by a reference to the polity of Israel, Hooker affirms in a noble passage the spiritual character even of civil government:

“A gross error it is, to think that regal power ought to serve for the good of the body, and not of the soul: for men’s temporal peace, and not for their eternal safety: as if God had ordained kings for no other end and purpose but only to fat up men like hogs, and to see that they have their mast.”†

He explains at some length the sense in which the Sovereign was styled the “Head” of the Church, and discusses the specific functions implied in the Headship. The right to legislate belongs to every free and independent society and *a fortiori* to the Church of God:

“When we speak of the right which naturally belongeth to a commonwealth, we speak of that which needs must belong to the Church of God. For if the commonwealth be Christian, if the people which are of it do publicly embrace the true religion, this very thing doth make it the Church, as hath been shewed. So that unless the verity and purity of religion do take from them

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\* P. 447.

† P. 453.

which embrace it, that power with which otherwise they are possessed; look what authority, as touching laws for religion, a commonwealth hath simply, it must of necessity being Christian have the same as touching laws for Christian religion.”\*

“The power of making ecclesiastical laws” must not be confined to “the clergy in their synods,” nor may the precedents of the primitive Church be pleaded to the contrary:

“As now the state of the Church doth stand, kings not being then that which now they are, and the clergy not now that which then they were: till it be proved that some special law of Christ hath for ever annexed unto the clergy alone the power to make ecclesiastical laws, we are to hold it a thing most consonant with equity and reason, that no ecclesiastical laws be made in a Christian commonwealth, without consent as well of the laity as of the clergy, but least of all without consent of the highest power. For of this thing no man doubteth—namely, that in all societies, companies, and corporations, what severally each shall be bound unto, it must be with all their assents ratified. Against all equity it were that a man should suffer detriment at the hands of men, for not observing that which he never did either by himself or by others, mediately or immediately, agree unto; much more that a king should constrain all others unto the strict observation of any such human ordinance as passeth without his own approbation. In this case therefore especially that vulgar axiom is of force, *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet.*”†

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\* P. 502.

† P. 504.

The right of Parliament to legislate for the National Church followed directly from this reasoning:

“The parliament of England, together with the convocation annexed thereunto, is that whereupon the very essence of all government within this kingdom doth depend; it is even the body of the whole realm; it consisteth of the king, and of all that within the land are subject unto him: for they all are there present, either in person or by such as they voluntarily have derived their very personal right unto. The parliament is a court not so merely temporal as if it might meddle with nothing but only leather and wool.”\*

Reason and religion agree in referring the preparation of ecclesiastical laws to the clergy as men who might fairly be looked upon as religious experts, but the actual process of legislation could belong to nothing less considerable than the Parliament which represents the nation:

“The most natural and religious course in making laws is, that the matter of them be taken from the judgment of the wisest in those things which they are to concern. In matters of God, to set down a form of public prayer, a solemn confession of the articles of Christian faith, rites and ceremonies meet for the exercise of religion; it were unnatural not to think the pastors and bishops of our souls a great deal more fit, than men of secular trades and callings: howbeit when all which the wisdom of all sorts can do is done for devising of laws in

the Church, it is the general consent of all that giveth them the form and vigour of laws without which they could be no more unto us than the counsels of physicians to the sick: well might they seem as wholesome admonitions and instructions, but laws could they never be without consent of the whole Church, which is the only thing that bindeth each member of the Church to be guided by them. . . . Wherefore to define and determine even of the Church's affairs by way of assent and approbation, as laws are defined of in that right of power, which doth give them the force of laws; thus to define our own Church's regiment, the parliament of England hath competent authority."\*

It will be noticed that the position of the clergy in respect of ecclesiastical legislation is throughout grounded on the reasonable plea that they are religious experts. The notion of any Divine right inherent in them *qua* clergymen is wholly absent.

How far did Hooker's assumption of the identity of the Christian nation and the National Church correspond with fact? He could not, of course, have supposed that the English nation was in such sense Christian that every Englishman was a devout believer. The sixteenth century was as familiar with unbelief and ill-living as any other. Hooker meant the nation in its corporate capacity, expressing its common mind through its laws and institutions and policies. So judged, the English nation was certainly

\* Pp. 512, 513.



Christian, and therefore in Hooker's view was rightly regarded as an autonomous Church. The Royal Supremacy was the constitutional form in which the autonomy of the National Church found expression, and more, it was for Hooker and his Anglican contemporaries the inevitable and divinely ordained form. To the men of the sixteenth century the first duty of the supreme "Head" or "Governor" was to guard the purity of the faith from the attacks of hereticks, and the unity of the Church from the perverse individualism of schismatics. Experience slowly taught, first, the futility of persecution, and then its inherent wrongness. But the process of learning implied no failure of the national Christianity, but rather its advance. The national legislature under William III. was more evidently and consciously swayed by the principles of Christ's religion when it passed the Toleration Act than was the national legislature under Charles II. when it passed the "Clarendon Code." Archbishop Tillotson was a better exponent of the Gospel than Archbishop Sheldon. Religious toleration implied a certain loss of symmetry, but no failure of Christian principle.

The case is not otherwise when the effect of the transition from personal to limited monarchy is considered. There is no necessary incom-

patibility between Hooker's main position (viz., that a Christian nation has supremacy in matters ecclesiastical because it constitutes a National Church) and the exercise of Royal Supremacy, not by the Sovereign acting as an individual, but by the Sovereign acting constitutionally by the advice of the Prime Minister. Laws and lawcourts are not less Christian than injunctions and the Court of High Commission. A modern democracy vests the nation's authority in the majority of the citizens: so long as the majority wills to maintain a national profession of Christianity by an establishment of the Christian Church, Hooker's assumption retains validity. It might indeed fairly be argued that national legislation, since religious toleration was enacted and the State has become fully democratic, has been more consonant with the just and humane principles of the Gospel than it was in the days when uniformity was enforced by severe penalties, and when the governing factor within the State was the Monarch, or the Nobility, or a small section of the People.

The really serious change in modern times is to be perceived, not in the law and constitution of the country, but in its social conditions. The rapid growth of the population caused by the transition from a predominantly agricultural society to industrialism, and the consequent

massing of the people in the great manufacturing and distributing centres, have told with disastrous effect on the relations of Church and State. The nation has largely outgrown its ecclesiastical system, so that great multitudes of citizens are slightly affected, if affected at all, by the National Church. It is difficult to recognize any obvious fitness in the application of Hooker's theory of the Christian nation as *ipso facto* an autonomous Church to a nation of which a large proportion, perhaps a majority, of the citizens stand outside the public profession of Christianity. Most English-born people have been baptized, and mostly they are married, in the parish churches, and buried with Christian rites; but these religious acts have become the conventions of respectable English life, and are not generally felt to carry their proper religious significance. Only in a very shadowy sense can great sections of the people be described as Christian, save, of course, for the not unimportant facts, that they are the heirs of an immemorial tradition of Christianity, that they breathe a social atmosphere saturated with Christian ideas, and are in contact, albeit intermittent and almost unsuspected, with the National Church.

Statistics are an untrustworthy instrument for measuring the hold of a National Church upon the nation. It is certainly the case that,

on the most favourable estimate, hardly more than one-fifth of the population is included in the formal membership of the Established Church and of the non-established Nonconformist Churches; but to this must certainly be added a large body of persons who, though not counted in the lists of membership, are connected with Christianity by many ties, and would deeply resent exclusion from the Christian description. Moreover, the least Christian sections of the community are also for the most part the least educated and socially considerable. Their influence is far less than their numbers might suggest.

An ancient Established Church has its hold on the nation by many titles, and by many associations, which are not solely religious. The position of the Church of England in the life of the English people is the final result of a long history. It was never shaped deliberately, though often in various details deliberately modified and revised; but in its essential features it is the final phase of a development which has been coeval with the nation itself. The severance of Church and State in England would be a very violent proceeding, if violence be measured by the extent of the breach of historic continuity. Christianity would be gravely prejudiced by the disestablishment and disendowment of the



Church of England. So much can hardly be disputed even by those who think that the prejudice would be but temporary, and that ultimately religion would gain in quality and influence. Obviously much would depend on the actual process of disestablishment, the terms imposed on the Church in the dissolution of its immemorial association with the State, and the spirit in which those terms were carried into effect. The broad effect of English legislation since the Reform Act has been to loosen the ties which hold Church and State together. If it were not for the ecclesiastical property the formal severance might be consummated with but little difficulty. But disendowment, the inevitable accompaniment of disestablishment, is really the core of the practical problem. No circumstance at the present time tells more injuriously upon the efficiency of the National Church than the poverty of the parochial clergy. The loss of the endowments (which exceed £3,000,000 in annual income, apart from the residence houses existing in nearly all the parishes) would create a situation so grave that no responsible Churchman can contemplate it without dismay. What will become of the cathedrals and parish churches, which include the noblest historical monuments in the country? Apart from the endowments they could hardly be used and maintained in many places,

Their secularization would inflict a deep wound on the self-respect of the nation. Yet it is difficult to see how a disestablished Church, thrown upon its own resources—that is, dependent on the voluntary contributions of its own members—could retain possession of buildings which are the heirlooms of the English people, as well as places consecrated to Christian worship and teaching. If the bulk of the property should be secularized, it appears inevitable that the scale of ecclesiastical effort would have to be largely reduced. In the words of the homely proverb, the garment would have to be cut according to the cloth. But the disappearance of a resident ministry from the small country parishes would certainly be felt as a social privation by the people, and could not but weaken the influence of Christianity in the nation.

Not less unfortunate would be the result of disendowment on the position of the clergy, for they would lose the most effective securities of pastoral independence—a secure income and a fixed tenure of office. Compelled to depend to a large extent, if not altogether, on the voluntary contributions of their congregations, they would surely find themselves perilously dependent for their maintenance on their personal popularity. Such dependence accords ill with the work of a moral teacher, whose duty may require conduct

which is highly unpopular, and whose performance of that duty must needs become vastly more difficult when it is conditioned by material loss. The independence of the clergyman, which may well be reckoned the indispensable condition of his spiritual efficiency, would be further endangered by the unavoidable change in the method of his appointment to office and the conditions of his tenure. Few parts of the established system have been more severely criticized in recent years than those which concern these cardinal concerns of appointment and tenure. "Private patronage" and "the freehold in the benefice" figure prominently in the latest attacks on the Establishment. It may be freely admitted that neither can be easily reconciled with any coherent and satisfying theory of spiritual office, that both have lent themselves but too readily to grave abuse; and yet it may be fairly urged that neither lacks effective apology in the opinion of those, not the least judicious or the least religious of citizens, who are accustomed to subordinate theoretical requirements to practical considerations.

"Private patronage" has its roots in a distant past, and presupposes a state of society which is everywhere passing away, and in most places has already disappeared. That the right to appoint to spiritual office should be itself a

property, capable as such of sale, purchase, and bequest, is indeed a startling paradox; and the law has within recent years shown a disposition to surround the exercise of the patron's ownership rights with many restrictions designed to mitigate, if not wholly to restrain, its abuse. Originally the patron derived his right to nominate the parish clergyman from the fact that he had himself built the parish church, and endowed it with a sufficient maintenance for the minister. This was a respectable and sufficient title, but it tended to lose both respectability and sufficiency as time passed, and the very memory of the original benefaction faded from memory. In the course of centuries families died out, their possessions passed into other hands, and now there is a tangled history of many legal transactions behind the actual ownership of patronage rights. So long indeed as the country gentlemen lived on their estates they had an evident interest in the parish church. The incumbent was always a near neighbour; his duties necessitated a measure of intimacy; his character and pastoral efficiency were of considerable importance to the general welfare. It might be argued with considerable plausibility that the local landowner was marked out by his position as the best guardian of the parochial concern in the parson's appointment, since of



all the parishioners he was himself probably the most closely affected by it. The argument, however, takes too little account of possible divergence of interest, economic and political, between the local landowner and his neighbours, who are also his tenants, and it ignores the temptation which may dispose him to use his privileged position for the advantage of his family. In point of fact both of these contingencies have been disastrously common. The parson and the squire have become identified in the view of the rural population as champions and beneficiaries of economic interests and political opinions which no longer command general acceptance, and are actively resented by increasing numbers of people. From "private patronage" has grown the strange phenomenon of the "family living," and this feature of the English Establishment is only now declining, since the growth of a more sensitive public opinion and the increasing poverty of the clergy have rendered the life of a country incumbent arduous and unattractive to the gentry.

All this cannot be denied, but there is another side to the "family living." The English are an intensely conservative people, and rural life presents problems not easily solved, or even understood, by strangers. It has certainly been no inconsiderable advantage that so many

parishes have been in the hands of men belonging to local families of consequence, possessed of sufficient private income to be indifferent to the inadequacy of the official endowment, and familiarized from their birth with country people, whose distinctive points of view they share, and whose peculiar difficulties they know. No well-informed observer of parochial life in the country would pass an indiscriminating condemnation on "private patronage," or even on the system of "family livings." The abuses have been numerous and considerable, but the total effect has not been universally, or even generally, unsatisfactory.

Much the same may be said of the "freehold" in his "benefice," which secures to the parish clergyman, so long as he fulfils his statutory obligations (which are by no means heavy), a life-tenure of his "cure of souls." In the one scale there may be placed the ill-effects of this secure position in the weakening of discipline and the encouragement of indolence; in the other scale, there must go the sense of pastoral independence, the enhancement of personal consequence, the closer identification with the social life of the parish, and especially the relief from humiliating anxiety. It is hard to say which scale kicks the beam. Within recent years the law has imposed limitations on the parson's

freehold by strengthening the disciplinary powers of the Bishop. The principal reason why grave scandals still continue is far more often the impossibility of obtaining adequate evidence of misconduct than the lack of episcopal authority or the absence of a desire on the part of the Bishops to enforce the law. There is the greatest reluctance on the side of the parishioners to bear testimony against their parson, whose ill-behaviour may be none the less notorious, and the subject of bitter and continual complaint. The situation in all disciplinary concerns is still further complicated by the circumstance that the parish clergyman is almost always married. Compassion for the hardship entailed on the wife and children disinclines the neighbours for the odious tasks of formal delation and hostile witness. Thus the grossest scandals may be perpetuated, not by the defects of the legal system, nor by any failure of episcopal duty, but by the compassionate condonation of the parishioners. Happily scandal is infrequent, though indolence is too common among the rural incumbents. The smallness of the populations, the consequent absence of any effective public opinion, and the general stagnation of life, are all unfavourable to clerical exertion. In the circumstances a fair critic might perhaps be disposed to emphasize rather the small extent than

the grave character of clerical failure in rural England.

The war has had an unfortunate effect on the country parishes, for no section of the community has suffered so heavily both in life and in property as the landowners. In many cases the last representatives of ancient county families have perished in the conflict; in all the crushing burden of the taxation caused by the monstrous expenditure of the war has rendered residence in the old homes difficult if not altogether impossible. The result is apparent in sales of land on an unprecedented scale. An agrarian revolution is silently passing over the country. In the room of the old families, who knew and loved the districts in which they had lived for generations, there is coming into the country a new type of landowner, which knows little and cares less about rural life. The parish clergy have lost their principal supporters, and find themselves embarrassed by the withdrawal of financial assistance, and shadowed by the absence of friendly and congenial neighbours. Time may mitigate and even remove the disadvantage, but for the present it is acutely felt.

In the country the principal problems of ecclesiastical administration arise from the poverty and loneliness of the incumbents. In the towns, the most pressing episcopal embarrassments arise



from the lawlessness of the parochial clergy. The legal system has been brought to a deadlock by the organized disobedience of a considerable section of the "Catholic" clergy. The key to this astonishing situation lies in the circumstances of the English Reformation.

The ecclesiastical courts of the medieval Church survived the Reformation, but the appellate jurisdiction of the Papacy was transferred to the Sovereign, and the law which was administered in them was no longer the Roman canon law, which had governed their procedure in England as throughout the West, but "the King's ecclesiastical law" enacted by Parliament and (under the strait conditions imposed by the Submission of the Clergy, 1532) by the provincial Convocations. It had been intended by the Reformers to review, revise, and recast the medieval code, and the *Reformatio Legum* remains the considerable but abortive result of their efforts in this direction. Legal authority was never given to this curious essay in ecclesiastical legislation, which is chiefly valuable to the historical student for the light it casts on the principles and ideals of its authors. Thus it has happened that Henry VIII.'s makeshift arrangement for bridging over the interval during which the revision of the medieval canons was being effected has been perpetuated, and the Pre-Reformation code

has not only to some extent retained authority in the Reformed Church, but has acquired statutory force. What was an historical accident has been transformed by the eager ingenuity of partisanship into an ecclesiastical principle, and many illegalities are gravely justified by modern Anglo-Catholics by appeals to the canonical code of the unreformed Church.

The Tractarians themselves do not appear to have objected against the ecclesiastical courts, but their disciples soon discovered that courts created by Parliament, and drawing their jurisdiction from the Sovereign, were lacking in "spiritual" authority. Their worst suspicions were confirmed by the hostile verdicts which were passed in them so soon as the Tractarian innovations became the subjects of litigation. To breaches of the law there now succeeded a reasoned repudiation of the entire legal system of the Established Church. In the eyes of the scrupulous Anglo-Catholic no part of the ecclesiastical machinery retains authority, for all proceeds under the Royal Supremacy constitutionally exercised by the final court of appeal, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Public opinion in England is rightly sensitive whenever the claim of the individual conscience is concerned. Prosecutions for ceremonial illegality were not infrequent when the novelty of

the innovations was fresh and the resentment they provoked keen, but they practically ceased as soon as the conscientious character of the lawlessness became apparent. At the present time the coercive discipline of the Church of England is almost completely paralyzed. This highly anomalous situation perplexes and humiliates the Episcopate. The Bishops are endeavouring to maintain order and discipline without recourse to the lawcourts. Episcopal authority, so enthusiastically exalted in theoretical arguments, is as enthusiastically repudiated in practice. Like the guinea which the Vicar of Wakefield bestowed on his daughters, not to be expended but possessed for the honour of the family, the Apostolical Succession in the Church of England might seem designed to serve less as a principle of spiritual government than as the proof of ecclesiastical character. In effect, the attempt to maintain order in the Church by episcopal authority without recourse to the lawcourts has met with little success. There has developed within the National Church a new kind of congregationalism, not less "independent" than the old of external control because it is self-styled "Catholic," and professes an ardent belief in the Apostolic authority of the Bishops!

Anachronisms and anomalies may be more defensible in practice than in theory. That this

is the case with those which abound in the Established Church is strongly argued by many of its most thoughtful and attached members. It has been already pointed out that the much-denounced abuses which have grown about the parochial system do, as a matter of experience, secure important advantages, which go some way towards justifying their continuance. In respect of the naked congregationalism, which marks the latest phase of the Oxford Movement, a similar plea may be offered. Society, it may be urged, is in process of rapid change. In such circumstances a rigid ecclesiastical system, such as that which the Establishment was designed to secure, is ill adapted to satisfy the spiritual needs of the English people. It is to the ultimate advantage of the national Christianity that there should be large liberty of experiment in the sphere of pastoral and congregational life. That liberty is necessarily refused by the law, and by the Bishops, as charged with the administration of the law, but it may be none the less indispensable in the interest of religion. It is better that it should be gained by the lawless action of individuals than that it should not be gained at all. The argument is plausible, and not without real force. But there are considerations on the other side which must be held to outweigh it. Lawlessness is not favourable to virtue, and



a clergy habituated to disobedience is not well placed for the task of preaching morality. It is certain that the influence of the parish clergy has been gravely weakened by the association in the public mind of the clerical profession and a lower standard of truthfulness and loyalty than the general conscience demands. Much is forgiven to zeal and devotion; but men feel that the pleas offered in excuse for clerical illegality are often trivial and insincere, the fruits of a hair-splitting casuistry, not of a candid intelligence. Nor can it be doubted that there are grave searchings of heart among the law-breaking clergy themselves. A bad or doubtful conscience in the pastor does not promote his efficiency, nor may it be supposed that his industry and self-sacrifice can really atone for behaviour that is essentially indefensible. The nation stands to lose heavily by the moral discredit which clerical lawlessness and ill-faith have brought upon the clergy of the Church of England.

The war has affected deeply the system and working of the Established Church. To it, more than to any other cause, must be attributed the rapid and almost unopposed success of the agitation for autonomy which carried the Enabling Act (1919). The passing of this Act marks a new departure of the utmost importance in the

history of the National Church. Two streams of discontent blended in the agitation of which the Act was the result. On the one hand, the practical Reformers, of whom many were Radicals in politics, and as such advocates of disestablishment, sought to "democratize" the Church by abolishing the "autocracy of the incumbent," and vesting power in parish councils elected by the parishioners. On the other hand, the Anglo-Catholics, pursuing their ideal of a medieval independence of the Church, aimed at the abolition of "State control," and the attainment of ecclesiastical autonomy. There was little in common between the two save extreme discontent with the existing state of things and an eager desire for speedy and drastic change. Both favoured disestablishment, but neither felt it judicious openly to avow as much, for the general body of Anglicans was still frankly hostile to that policy. "Life and Liberty" was a plea more telling and less open to objection, though its implied suggestion that the Establishment involved the Church in paralysis of its spiritual life, and in privation of its spiritual liberty, could hardly be reconciled with any policy that stopped short of severing the link between Church and State. The fervour of the agitators was assisted by the lassitude of the nation. The war absorbed general attention. Most English

laymen were either serving in the fleets and armies or were engaged in war work at home. They could not, even if they had desired, withdraw themselves from the urgent business of the hour in order to consider ecclesiastical questions which, in more normal times, would have merited and received their attention. Another circumstance facilitated the agitation. In the earlier stages of the war the Archbishops, yielding to the disordered enthusiasm of the time, had organized a National Mission, which had brought into prominence within the Church a considerable number of younger clergy, and laity of both sexes, whose ardour was out of all proportion to their knowledge and experience, and who were but too ready to attribute the apparent failures of the Church to the faults of its Establishment. Thus the normal checks on precipitate action were removed precisely at the moment when proposals for drastic change were being most eagerly advocated. The close of the war disclosed a domestic situation of extreme complexity and considerable danger. A great demand for the reconstruction of society swept over the country. The air was filled with reforming projects. Why should the Church, which of all the national institutions seemed most plainly calling for reform, lie outside the general process? There were not wanting those who pointed out that

the excitements of the time were very unfavourable to the patient and far-sighted wisdom which were indispensable if reforms, whether in Church or State, were to be sound and lasting. Their prudent remonstrances were listened to with impatience, and swept aside with contempt. The project of transforming the National Church into an autonomous denomination, and remodelling its system on the lines of the non-established or disestablished churches of Great Britain, the United States, and the Colonies—which had long been advocated by small coteries of Churchmen and was being enthusiastically advocated by the “Life and Liberty” agitators—“held the field” as the only coherent policy of Church Reform. The Enabling Bill was passed through both Houses of Parliament with unexpected rapidity, for it had been drawn with such skill that, under the rules of the House of Commons as interpreted by the Speaker, its principal provisions could not be discussed. Before the end of 1919 the Bill received the Royal Assent, and a new chapter in the long history of the Church of England was opened.

Under the Enabling Act (1919) a “National Assembly of the Church of England,” consisting of the Bishops, the members of the two Convocations, and a body of elected laity, has been set up, and clothed with legislative powers. The



authority of Parliament has in theory been preserved without alteration, and an elaborate machinery has been created with the object of ensuring the constitutional character of the legislation which shall be passed by the new body; but in practice the task of ecclesiastical legislation has been transferred from Parliament to the new National Assembly, and Parliament really retains little more than a veto on the legislation submitted to it under the Act. In every parish there is established a parochial council clothed with statutory powers, of which the precise extent has not yet been defined, but which will certainly be considerable. In fixing the qualifications of the parochial electors, the Enabling Act abandons the old generous assumption of the common law, that every English-born person is *ipso facto* a member of the Church of England, and limits the franchise to those parishioners of both sexes above the age of eighteen, who have been baptized, and have signed a declaration that they "do not belong to any religious body which is not in communion with the Church of England."

It has been objected that this franchise drives out of membership in the National Church many religious persons who have hitherto claimed it. Great numbers of English Nonconformists, especially among the Methodists and Wesleyans,

have clung to the view, which has strong justification in the history of English religion, that they do not necessarily renounce their membership in the National Church by joining some other society of Christians. "Occasional conformity" has been defended by eminent Anglicans as a proof of large-minded charity rather than as an evidence of latitudinarian indifference. These friendly Nonconformists have been accustomed to receive the Holy Communion from time to time in the parish churches; they have often served as churchwardens; and, as householders, they have always had their place in the parish vestries where the churchwardens are annually elected and other ecclesiastical business is transacted. By the Enabling Act they are deprived of these rights, and will be legally excluded from membership in the National Church. The effect of this change in the law can hardly be favourable to the spirit and practice of Christian fraternity, and the change is in fact deplored by many excellent Christians, both Anglican and Nonconformist.

The time has not yet arrived for passing a judgment on the Enabling Act, but its incongruity with the idea and policy of the English Establishment is apparent. It is sufficiently evident, indeed, that the maintenance of a religious establishment in a modern democracy has become

extremely difficult, and there is little likelihood that the difficulty will grow less in the future. Under the conditions which disestablishment would create, the autonomy conferred by the Enabling Act, or at least autonomy of some kind, would be indispensable to the Church. It may be true—as the principal promoters of the Act would maintain—that the policy of habituating the Church of England beforehand for the situation which the crisis of disestablishment will create, may serve to facilitate the ultimate reconstruction of the ecclesiastical system. This apology assumes the secularization of the English State. In that unhappy event the State will not be the only, nor perhaps the principal sufferer, though the distinction is unreal since there is no interest of the State really comparable in vital importance with the efficiency in the deepest sense of the Christian society. The distinction between Church and State, inevitable in political discussions, really enshrines a dangerous fallacy, as Hooker perceived. Using the terms in their conventional senses, the State would suffer less than the Church from the process of formal secularization. The intimate association with the national life which the Establishment has expressed and secured has had its effect—a beneficent effect—on the type of Christianity presented to the English people. If the interest

of ecclesiastical efficiency, the easy working of the administrative system, be alone considered, it is easy to imagine that there might even be advantages in disestablishment. It is certainly arguable that, in all the circumstances of modern society, establishment is rather a hindrance than an assistance to efficiency in this respect. One by one the old incidents of the State connection have disappeared. Only the presence of the Archbishops and Bishops in the House of Lords, the Crown patronage of the higher positions in the hierarchy, and the discredited system of the ecclesiastical courts survive. It may well appear that these might be surrendered with little loss to the Church, and with substantial relief to the State. But when from the Church (*i.e.*, the clerical machine) we pass to religion the case is far otherwise.

Hitherto in England there has been no such sharp antagonism between Christianity and modern culture as in the Latin countries and in Germany is but too evident. The contrast which Voltaire commented upon before the Revolution has not even yet disappeared. A large, tolerant version of Christianity has in England been met by a type of religious scepticism which is considerate and respectful. In France the narrow zeal of the Jesuitized Church has been reflected in the bitter anti-clericalism of



the State. Disestablishment will tend to approximate the situation in England to that which has long existed in France. This process of assimilation, perhaps, will be facilitated by that closer intercourse between the two countries which is one certain consequence of the war. Clericalism and secularism have much in common. Both unite in demanding a sharp severance between "spiritual" and "secular" concerns. The essential idea of establishment disallows that severance as unnatural, unwholesome, and in principle un-Christian. Church and State alike stand to lose by the triumph of these kindred though conflicting tendencies, clericalist and secularist. For religion is less a distinct interest than a penetrating spirit. The isolation of the clergy from the normal activities of citizenship is fraught with danger to the soundness of their teaching; the exclusion of the clergy from the service of the State tends to empty that service of its highest significance. The student of Christianity will regard *professionalism* as a not less formidable enemy than *Erastianism*. It must be added that, while the conditions under which the clergy must work in a modern democracy are unfavourable to the historic causes of Erastian complaisance, those conditions are eminently favourable to the development within the Christian Church of a narrow-minded professionalism

which exalts the letter of religion and ignores the spirit.

The patriotic Englishman will not lightly approve the dissolution of that close union between Church and State which has brought so many blessings to the nation; the considering Churchman will be slow to facilitate a change which must needs have such formidable consequences on the work and witness of the Church.

What the Church has effected for the nation through the many centuries of their organic union may be illustrated by a scene very familiar to those who visit London. The grouped buildings of Westminster are a parable in stone, in which the institutions of the national life are all significantly symbolized. On one side, the Houses of Parliament and the ancient Hall of Westminster recall the representative and judicial factors; on another side, the famous public school worthily presents to view the system of national education. Dean's Yard, with its numerous offices, each one the centre of some great philanthropic agency, may stand for the manifold activities of social reform; across the road are the Central Hall of a great Nonconformist denomination and a large Hospital, each bearing a distinctive witness too plain to be mistaken. Right in the centre, as a mother in the midst of her children, stands the fairest and oldest member

of the group, the peerless Abbey Church of Westminster, the creation and the symbol of that mighty and beneficent institution which has stimulated and developed all the rest, under whose protecting shadow all the rest grew and flourished, the National Church of England. Disestablishment and disendowment, regarded in the light of history, appear equivalent to the proposal to improve the aspect of the grouped buildings of Westminster by levelling to the ground the noblest of them all !

## LECTURE VII

### THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

THE National Church has shared the fortunes of the nation. Just as the insular people has in the course of the last three, and mainly during the last two, centuries spread over the world, and become the possessor and ruler of the vastest and most populous empire of which history has knowledge, so the island Church has been extended into the most distant regions of the earth, and now is compelled to realize the consequences of the fact on its own system and outlook. The Encyclical just issued of the Sixth Lambeth Conference finds in the cosmopolitan character of Anglicanism a reason for thinking that the Anglican Church may be able to point the way to the reunion of Christendom:

“The characteristics of that (Anglican) fellowship are well worth attention when the reunion of the world-wide Church is in men’s thoughts. The fact that the Anglican Communion has become world-wide forces upon it some of the problems which must always beset the unity of the Catholic Church itself. Perhaps, as we ourselves are dealing with these problems, the way will appear in which the future reunited Church must deal with them.”



Be this as it may, no account of Anglicanism can refuse to give a prominent place to the decennial gatherings of Anglican Bishops, of which the sixth has just completed its sessions at Lambeth. That these gatherings have already exercised a profound influence on the beliefs and ideals of the Anglican Communion, and notably of the Church of England, cannot be questioned, nor that this influence is growing quickly, and will have decisive weight in the future. It is important, therefore, to appraise justly the quality of that influence, and the conditions under which it affects the development of Anglicanism. In this lecture we propose to discuss the origin and character, the method, and the effect of the Lambeth Conference.

### I. ORIGIN AND CHARACTER.

In 1860, the Convocation of Canterbury condemned a volume of Essays and Reviews which had been published by a small group of Liberal Churchmen, of whom the most eminent were Jowett, Mark Pattison, and Temple, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. A great controversy arose, and soon led to litigation. Two of the essayists were prosecuted in the Court of Arches, and were suspended by that Court. On appeal to the Privy Council, however, the

sentence was reversed. This evident superiority of the secular over the ecclesiastical authority gave the utmost offence to the Anglican clergy, now largely leavened by Tractarian views on Church and State. The fear of heresy was united with the hatred of Erastianism. Fuel was added to the fire when, in 1862, Colenso, Bishop of Natal, published a volume on the Pentateuch, in which the historical character of the Mosaic narratives was roughly handled. The Church in South Africa was then headed by a zealous Tractarian, Gray, Bishop of Cape Town, and he made no delay in giving practical expression to what he conceived to be the duty of a Catholic hierarchy confronted by false teaching. Colenso was deposed, but on appeal to the Privy Council was sustained in his bishoprick. It was held by the judges that Bishop Gray possessed no such jurisdiction as he had assumed. Thus the same formidable issues were presented in new and unexpected circumstances. The poison of Erastianism was infecting the Daughter Churches, and heresy, detected and condemned by the spiritual authority, could count on the protection of the civil! Alarm spread throughout the Colonial Churches, and from one of them, the Church of Canada, came the suggestion that the whole episcopate of the Anglican Communion should be assembled for the treatment of so

grave a mischief. On September 20th, 1865, at the Provincial Synod of the Canadian Church, a motion was unanimously carried begging the Archbishop of Canterbury to devise means "by which the members of our Anglican Communion in all quarters of the world should have a share in the deliberations for her welfare, and be permitted to have a representation in one general council of her members gathered from every land." The very phrase employed—"general council"—carried an implication of authority, which in the actual circumstances could not fail to be highly significant, and did in fact arouse the suspicions of all those Anglicans who valued the final authority of the State as the security of theological liberty and, not less, of the just treatment of clergymen accused of heresy. The Canadian proposal secured the support of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, which (May, 1866) conveyed to the Archbishop "a respectful expression of an earnest desire that he would be pleased to issue an invitation to all the Bishops in communion with the Church of England, to assemble at such time and place, and accompanied by such persons as may be deemed fit, for the purpose of Christian sympathy and mutual counsel on matters affecting the welfare of the Church at home and abroad." The language of this resolution was quite general,

but it could not but be interpreted in the light of another resolution which was also passed by Convocation:

“That Dr. Colenso, having been not only excommunicated by the Bishop of Cape Town and the Bishops of South Africa with him in Synod, but also deposed from his office of bishop—if a bishop shall be duly elected and consecrated for the See of Natal in the place of Bishop Colenso—the Church of England would of necessity hold communion with that Bishop.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Longley) exerted himself to remove the apprehensions which were widely felt as to the probable action of such an assembly of Bishops as he was pressed to convoke. In the Upper House of Convocation he used the clearest language:

“It should be distinctly understood,” he said, ‘that at this meeting no declaration of faith shall be made, and no decision come to which shall affect generally the interests of the Church, but that we shall meet together for brotherly counsel and encouragement. . . . I should refuse to convene any assembly which pretended to enact any canons, or affected to make any decisions binding on the Church. . . . I feel I undertake a great responsibility in assenting to this request, and certainly if I saw anything approaching to what is apprehended as likely to result from it, I should not be disposed to sanction it, but I can assure my brethren that I should enter on this meeting in the full confidence that nothing would pass but that which tended to brotherly love and union,



and would bind the Colonial Church, which is certainly in a most unsatisfactory state, more closely to the Mother Church."

This attitude found expression in the formal invitation which (February 22nd, 1867) was issued from Lambeth to all the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, then 144 in number, and again, in his opening address to the Conference, when it met in September, 1867, the President emphasized the same point:

"It has never been contemplated," he said, "that we should assume the functions of a general synod of all the Churches in full communion with the Church of England, and take upon ourselves to enact canons that should be binding upon those here represented. We merely propose to discuss matters of practical interest, and pronounce what we deem expedient in resolutions which may serve as safe guides to future action. Thus it will be seen that our first essay is rather tentative and experimental, in a matter in which we have no distinct precedent to direct us."

These reiterated assurances did not suffice to dispel the misgivings which occasioned them. The Archbishop of York and the Bishops of Durham, Carlisle, Ripon, Peterborough, and Manchester, declined to attend the Conference, and others, including Bishop Thirlwall of S. David's, "postponed their acceptance until the official agenda paper or programme should be

published, a fact to which they afterwards called attention when the programme had unexpectedly been changed." In truth, the situation was such that, with the best intentions, the Archbishop was unable to carry out his pledges:

"No sooner had the Conference assembled than it became evident that the pledge of excluding the Natal difficulty from the discussion could not be kept. At the preliminary meeting the attempt was made to bring the question forward, and on more than one occasion the topic was reintroduced. On the fourth day the Bishop of Cape Town made a determined effort to procure from the assembled bishops their sanction to the consecration of a new Bishop of Natal. He even threatened to resign his see if his proposal were rejected. After a heated debate, a hypothetical resolution was adopted declaring that, if a new bishop were consecrated, there would be no necessary severance of communion between the Home and the Colonial Church. This resolution was interpreted by Bishop Gray to mean that the Conference had given its approval to the appointment of a new bishop. Such a misunderstanding, which could hardly have arisen unless the proceedings had been secret, may be thought to have justified Stanley's demand for complete publicity."\*

Dean Stanley, who had stood forward as the courageous champion of Bishop Colenso, resented the action of the Conference so deeply that he took a step which startled public opinion, and gave great umbrage to the American Bishops,

\* Vide *Life of Dean Stanley*, vol. ii., p. 197.

who were ignorant of the constitution of the Church of England, and could not understand how a Dean of Westminster could refuse the request of an Archbishop of Canterbury.

“The Conference concluded with a special service. Before the opening of the proceedings the Archbishop expressed a wish to hold this service in Westminster Abbey. In the uncertainty that Stanley felt as to the purposes for which the Conference was summoned, he feared that it might be used for party objects, such as giving support to the Bishop of Cape Town, repudiating the judgment of the Privy Council, and confirming the alleged deposition of the Bishop of Natal. He therefore declined to promise the use of the building for the proposed special service, though he offered it for other objects.”

His offer was refused, and the Dean found himself exposed to the severe criticism of the “religious” press. A courteous letter addressed to the Bishop of Vermont, in order to remove the impression of discourtesy which the American Bishops had received, drew from the Bishop a long and rudely worded reply, which disclosed his own ignorance of English conditions and his incapacity to understand the motives of his correspondent. These incidents, in many respects deplorable, had at least this useful result that they rooted in the public mind the understanding that the decennial meeting of Anglican

Bishops was not designed to claim the character or attempt the functions of an ecclesiastical synod. This understanding has been reiterated repeatedly by successive Archbishops of Canterbury, but it may be questioned whether it commands the wholehearted assent of any save the important minority of Liberal Churchmen who have drawn from their study of ecclesiastical history a deep distrust of conciliar decisions in matters of doctrine, and who perceive ever more clearly how disastrous to the highest interests of religious truth would be the intervention of clerical authority in the intellectual movements of the modern world. Bishop Wilberforce, the most conspicuous representative of Tractarian opinions in the first Lambeth Conference, writing to Bishop Milman (August 27th, 1867), expressed the mental attitude which the Anglo-Catholic Anglican still adopts towards the assembly of the Anglican Episcopate:

“We have now a very anxious matter in the Pan-Anglican Synod. We cannot act synodically; and yet to meet and not to act has a damaging air of weakness. . . . Being silent when the Church, if she could, certainly ought to speak, is no small evil and must be a scandal.”\*

It is not unimportant to note that this Bishop drafted the Encyclical which was issued by the Conference.

\* Vide *Life of Bishop Wilberforce*, vol. iii., p. 229.



## II. METHOD OF THE CONFERENCE.

The Lambeth Conference is composed solely of Bishops. Whether this was originally intended may be doubted. The Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation had suggested that the Bishops should be "accompanied by such persons as may be deemed fit," and certainly the actual composition of the Lower House and its constitutional position as an integral element in the Provincial Synod were difficult to reconcile with a purely episcopal character in the representative assembly of the Anglican Communion. The republican habit of the American Church pointed in the same direction. When the second Lambeth Conference was being projected, the Bishop of Pittsburgh indicated to Archbishop Tait that scruples were felt in the United States:

"While the Bishops generally were very favourably disposed towards the proposal (of a second Conference), some of them wished that any action of the Bishops should be preceded by some expression from the clerical and lay deputies that would prevent any thought that the Bishops were acting for themselves alone, and not also for and with the clergy and laity."

In spite of these indications of dissent, however, the purely episcopal character of the Conference has been maintained, and the mere increase of the number of the Bishops attending may well

seem to render any change impossible. The occasional invitation of "experts" to attend and address the Conference, or to give evidence before the Conference Committees, is the only mitigation of the fact. Two consequences of considerable importance have flowed from this circumstance. On the one hand, the debates have been secret; on the other hand, the conclusions of the Conference have been put forward in the authoritative style of Bishops: "*We, Archbishops and Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church*, etc." Both these consequences are unfortunate. The one operates to the heavy disadvantage of the minority, which may none the less, as is not uncommonly the case in ecclesiastical assemblies, include the best learning and judgment of the Conference. The other creates an atmosphere of unreality, which affects both the Bishops themselves and the Church which they represent and address. In view of the repeatedly emphasized fact that the Lambeth Conference is solely a consultative body, the principal value of its debates must be educative. That this is the case with the Bishops themselves is certain; that it would be the case with the public generally cannot be doubted. The subjects which are brought into discussion at a Lambeth Conference include many which are novel, complicated, and extremely important. There should surely attach

great value to the reasonings by which men charged with the solemn responsibilities of the episcopal office, and representing so wide a range of experience as the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, are led to their decisions. The reasonings may well be more serviceable than the resolutions, which, standing alone, may be difficult to understand. Publicity of debate would enable the religious public to judge the value of the resolutions, and to do justice to the minorities. It must be remembered that episcopal theory requires that one Bishop shall be regarded as equal to every other. The distinctive note of episcopal utterance is the note of authority. The Bishop is, on the episcopalian theory, possessed, by title of his consecration, not merely with the right to declare the mind of the Catholic Church, but with a specific competence for the task. One Bishop may be more learned, more experienced, more sagacious than another, but these qualities give him no greater authority, although the whole worth of his opinion must depend on them. If the debates of the Lambeth Conference were public, the difference in personal competence between the Bishops would be patent to the world, and votes would be weighed as well as counted. It may be observed that the circumstances in which the Bishops are appointed to their office

vary so widely that a mere counting of episcopal votes, as if one episcopal vote were as good as another, is peculiarly unfortunate. A missionary Bishop has to be chosen for reasons which have no special relevance to the case of a Bishop in England. Physical vigour and great ardour of devotion are indispensable in the one case; there are other qualities which might seem not less indispensable in the other. Zeal is rarely allied with learning, dispassionateness, and the love of justice. These, however, are the primary requisites of a sound judgment when such questions as those which engage the attention of a Lambeth Conference are being discussed.

Not only is the educative value of the debates lost by secrecy, and the minority prejudiced by being either ignored altogether or judged only in that particular wherein they are weakest—viz., number of votes—but the necessity of maintaining the appearance of unanimity among the Bishops compels the adoption of vague and general language with respect to subjects on which specific direction is the principal need of the Church. The unconfessed assumption of an assembly of Bishops is one which assumes a supernatural direction of their counsels, and tacitly claims a Divine authority for their decisions. Both the assumption and the claim are remote from modern ways of thinking, and command



no real acceptance outside small coteries of religious people. But the existence of the assumption and the suggestion of the claim create a prejudice against the pronouncements of the Conference which is unfortunate and unfair.

It is also always to be borne in mind that the deep division which has marked the Church of England since the Reformation, and which really gives the key to much that is perplexing in English religion, has extended itself throughout all the Daughter Churches. This division, not the anomalies and abuses of its ancient establishment, lies at the root of the disciplinary confusion of the Mother Church. An American or Colonial Bishop is free from the special embarrassments of the situation in England, but he is as familiar with the difference between the "Catholic" and the "Protestant" interpretations of Anglicanism, and as perplexed by the practical paradoxes which they occasion, as any English Bishop. The missionary efforts of the Anglican Communion are shadowed by the same sinister schism. It is reflected in the distinctive principles and methods of the two great missionary societies which are mainly responsible for the organization and maintenance of foreign missions. While the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel expresses "High" Church views, the Church Missionary Society is the glory of the "Low"

Church party. There are dioceses where Anglicanism is avowedly and aggressively "Catholic"; there are also dioceses where Anglicanism is as avowedly and aggressively "Protestant." In fact, the original sin of Anglicanism is everywhere disclosed in an incorrigible incoherence.

Accordingly, the method of the Lambeth Conference—its maintenance of apparent unanimity by the use of vague and ambiguous language, which is capable of different and even conflicting interpretations—is particularly unfortunate, for it really deceives nobody who is cognizant of the actual state of affairs within the Anglican Communion, and must tend to empty of practical value all the official pronouncements of the united Anglican Episcopate. It may fairly be questioned whether the Anglican Church would not, in the long run, gain by the adoption of a more normal and candid procedure; if more public attention would not be secured by resolutions which, although not always or often unanimous, and always preceded by open debate in which the play of conflicting tendencies and opinions within the Episcopate would perforce be frankly disclosed, would yet be felt to express a definite and deliberate verdict on the subjects under discussion. Unanimity ceases to be morally impressive when it appears to be the result of calculating diplomacy.

## III. EFFECT OF THE CONFERENCE.

The mere assembling together of the Anglican Bishops every ten years must have important effects on the development of Anglicanism. It is no slight matter that the Bishops should become personally acquainted with one another. Thereby the hierarchy is knit together by a thousand links of friendship and association. It must be serviceable to religion that the Bishops should exchange ideas, should bring their distinctive experiences into the common stock, and should unite in solemn acts of penitence and worship. The Anglican Communion spread over the world, existing under so many differing conditions, subjected to so many estranging influences, finds agreement beyond its hopes, grows conscious of an inner unity which transcends its divisions, and glows with the holy ardour of a common enthusiasm. All this is wholly advantageous to religion. There are, however, some other effects of these decennial Conferences with respect to which it is not easy to feel so confident.

The Lambeth Conference is a purely episcopal body. Its very constitution tacitly assumes a theory of the episcopal office which requires for its justification presuppositions more intelligible and satisfying in the fourth century than

in the twentieth. An assembly of Bishops, moreover, is under strong temptation to magnify the episcopal office, and it is the less likely to resist this temptation if many of its members are passionately convinced of their apostolical descent, and if it must needs adopt the language and style of a former age in which the Divine Authority of Bishops was the assumption of ecclesiastical life. The actual character of the Bishops as *ex officio* the sole representatives of their Churches confirms them in an exalted theory of their inherent authority. Moreover, it is the fact that, throughout the missionary area, the Bishop's position towards the native clergy and the mass of his converts is closely akin to that held by the founders and organizers of European Christianity. He brings the Gospel; he is its sole interpreter; his will is the final authority in all matters of doctrine and discipline; he is the sole link between the infant community and the Christian society from which he received his commission. His supremacy in the Church has its real and sufficient justification in the magnitude of the services which he renders, and is alone competent to render. The Episcopate, in fact, repeats the history of its earliest phase, and, as in the primitive ages which witnessed the original development of the Bishop's autocracy, proves itself the indispensable instrument



of unity and discipline. All this, however, has no parallel outside the missionary sphere. Within the "home Churches" the autocracy of the Bishop is wholly based on a theory which no longer commands the acceptance of historical students, forms no part of the living beliefs of ordinary Christians, and conflicts with the principles and procedures of the Reformation. "The almost superstitious glorification of the episcopal office" which, in the judgment of the Dean of S. Paul's, marked the action of the last Lambeth Conference, "depends mainly on a mere legend, the Apostolic Succession." That legend was the first principle of the Oxford Movement, and determines the ecclesiastical policy of the whole Anglo-Catholic party; but it is none the less an insecure foundation on which to base the organization of the Anglican Communion.

This exalted episcopalianism is not to be reconciled with the English Establishment, which is certainly affected unfavourably by the Lambeth Conferences. In an assembly of Bishops, most of whom represent non-established or disestablished Churches the English Bishops hold an anomalous and embarrassed position. They know that their own official action must be determined by considerations which do not affect the majority of the Bishops, and indeed are hardly intelligible to them. It is indeed a

tacit understanding—to quote the words of the Bishop of Pittsburgh, U.S.A., to Archbishop Tait—that “no topic should be introduced which must elicit discussions on the State relations of the Church of England,” but the difficulty is inherent in the situation. Everything specifically English has to be ignored, or apologized for, or explained away. The non-English Bishops adopt inevitably the tone of men who are spiritually better placed as being less shackled by secular law, and less subordinated to public claims. In the Conference there is nothing to remind them of those other shackles less easy to define and to denounce, which yet impinge on their spiritual liberty in manner and measure far more serious than the light yoke of the national Establishment. Insensibly the assumptions of the English Reformation are let slip from mind, and the English Bishops give in their adhesion to an ideal of the Church which is described as “Catholic,” and based on the precedents of “the undivided Church” of the first centuries. The definition of Anglicanism is becoming doubtful, for the official standards of the National Church of England are being found inadequate and unsatisfactory by Anglican Churches which are in no sense national, and which are necessarily destitute of the historic background which explains the English situation.

Certainly the official standards of the Church of England never contemplated an episcopal federation spread over the world, standing in no formal relation to the civil governments, and claiming a complete autonomy. They are not well suited to the needs of an international society. In this connection the Thirty-Sixth Resolution of the recent Lambeth Conference is highly significant. It deals with the case of Missionary Churches, and runs as follows:

“While maintaining the authority of the Book of Common Prayer as the Anglican standard of doctrine and practice, we consider that liturgical uniformity should not be regarded as a necessity throughout the Churches of the Anglican Communion. The conditions of the Church in many parts of the mission field render inapplicable the retention of that book as the one fixed liturgical model.”

It will be observed that the Book of Common Prayer is described as “the Anglican standard of doctrine and practice.” No mention is made of the Thirty-nine Articles, which hold the first place in the subscription required from English clergymen at their ordination, and which have been for more than three hundred years the Anglican standard of doctrine. The Prayer-Book was not designed to serve as a standard of doctrine, and certainly is ill adapted for the purpose. As a manual of worship and as a directory of

clerical conduct it is incomparable, but its very excellence for these purposes disqualifies it for any other. It does indeed include the three Creeds, which are the venerable summaries of fundamental Christian belief; but precisely because they are such they are not specifically Anglican. The doctrine of the Prayer-Book must be mainly inferred from its language, but that language is devotional, and has no reference to many of the important subjects which can hardly be omitted from any doctrinal standard designed to define and justify the Anglican version of Christianity.

The Anglican version of Christianity claims to be the true version as Anglicans are able to see it. Only as being true can that version vindicate a title to Christian acceptance. None of the distinctive features of historic Anglicanism is disclosed in the Book of Common Prayer save the use of the vernacular in public worship, the retention of liturgical forms, and the theory of national reformation stated in the Prefaces. A Roman Catholic or a Protestant might find nothing in the book to disallow his distinctive beliefs. Even if the Ordinal be looked upon as part of the Prayer-Book, it makes no difference, for its justification of the retention of episcopacy includes no theory of the ministry. In a Christendom divided deeply into sections on questions



of fundamental belief, no Church can really dispense with a more precise and sufficient standard of doctrine than that which the Prayer-Book provides. It may indeed be fairly admitted that the Thirty-nine Articles—a highly controversial document drawn up 350 years ago with direct reference to an ecclesiastical situation which has passed away, and with respect to issues which are wholly or partially obsolete—is obviously unsuitable for modern use even in the Church of England, and *a fortiori* in other Anglican Churches. To Asiatic and African converts it must be tiresome, unedifying, and hardly intelligible. None the less, if Anglicanism is to retain a distinctive character, and to justify its separate existence in the future, the Anglican Communion in England and elsewhere cannot dispense with a doctrinal confession which in the modern world shall serve the purpose which the Thirty-nine Articles have served in the past, and (though with obvious defects) still serve in the present.

It may fairly be supposed that the Bishops in adopting that Resolution did not look beyond the immediate necessities of the Mission Churches, and, therefore, it is not necessary to assume that the proper implications of an abandonment of the Thirty-nine Articles were perceived or intended. Yet it is proper to point out

that the abandonment of the historic standard of Anglican doctrine would destroy the *via media*, the middle way of moderate reformation, which the English Reformers pursued. For it would cut out of the Anglican system its specifically Protestant elements, would sever the link which unites the Church of England doctrinally with the other Reformed Churches, and would render indefinitely more difficult any reconciliation with the non-episcopal Communion.

The sixth Lambeth Conference was dominated by the conviction that the paramount need of the world at the present time is the recovery of the visible unity of the Christian Church. This conviction finds expression in the nobly conceived *Appeal to all Christian People*, which will wake a response in every genuine Christian's mind.

The appeal opens with a definition of the visible Church which disallows all the narrower limits of denominational history:

“We acknowledge all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, as sharing with us membership in the universal Church of Christ which is His Body.”

Thus the Bishops repudiate the arrogant assumption which has been implicit in so many appeals for unity, and which never fails to render

them of none effect. They do not address themselves to those who are without the visible Church, but to those who are within. Schism, they suggest, is not the mark of some sections only of the Christian family, but the common calamity of all. It is on the basis of this frank recognition of membership that they proceed to consider the unhappy divisions of Christendom:

“We believe that the Holy Spirit has called us in a very solemn and special manner to associate ourselves in penitence and prayer with all those who deplore the divisions of Christian people, and are inspired by the vision and hope of the whole Church.”

The *Appeal* reviews Christendom in its present divided condition “organized in different groups, each one keeping to itself gifts that rightly belong to the whole fellowship, and tending to live its own life apart from the rest.” Without passing an indiscriminating condemnation on the historic divisions of Christendom, of which the causes “lie deep in the past and are by no means simple or wholly blameworthy,” it is maintained that “principal factors in the mingled process” have been “self-will, ambition, and lack of charity among Christians,” and that these still continue to operate. But “the times call us to a new outlook and new measures.” In the actual state of the world a divided Church is inadequate to its great task, the faithful fulfil-

ment of which was never so urgently required. The ideal is generously phrased:

“The vision which rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all Truth, and gathering into its fellowship all ‘who profess and call themselves Christians,’ within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ. Within this unity Christian Communion now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled.”

So far, perhaps, the *Appeal* will command universal approval. The more definitely controversial area is entered upon when the difficult question of the methods by which the ideal of visible unity shall be pursued and attained is considered. The Lambeth “Quadrilateral” of 1888 is substantially reaffirmed, though the much debated fourth clause is stated in somewhat more conciliatory language. Instead of “the historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church,” we have “a ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the



whole Body.” The change of language is certainly not unintentional, and seems to imply that the form of polity in a united Church need not necessarily be episcopal; but the practical value of this concession disappears, since the *Appeal* at once proceeds to claim that “the Episcopate is the one means of providing such a ministry” as has been described:

“It is not that we call in question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those Communions which do not possess the Episcopate. On the contrary, we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace. But we submit that considerations alike of history and of present experience justify the claim which we make on behalf of the Episcopate. Moreover, we would urge that it is now, and will prove in the future, the best instrument for maintaining the unity and continuity of the Church. But we greatly desire that the office of a Bishop should be everywhere exercised in a representative and constitutional manner, and more truly express all that ought to be involved for the life of the Christian Family in the title of Father-in-God. Nay, more, we eagerly look forward to the day when, through its acceptance in a united Church, we may all share in that grace which is pledged to the members of the whole body in the apostolic rite of the laying-on of hands, and in the joy and fellowship of a Eucharist in which as one Family we may together, without any doubtfulness of mind, offer to the one Lord our worship and service.”

In thus basing the claim of the Episcopate solely on "history and present experience," the Bishops cut themselves free from much obsolete and exasperating pretension which has cumbered the pages of Anglican apologists, but they challenge the independent judgment of the student of Christian history, ancient and modern. Nor will their assumption that the Episcopate, alone of all the historic polities of the Christian society, is competent to gain universal acceptance, and thereby to acquire the authority of the whole Body, pass unchallenged. For the grounds of that assumption are by no means obvious. History, it may be plausibly argued, discloses the practical failure of episcopacy not less clearly than its early development, general acceptance, and unique power of survival. Every existing division is, in some sense, a proof of the failure of the Episcopate to maintain unity, for the visible Church was once episcopal. Could a candid student of ecclesiastical history in Great Britain during the last 400 years affirm that the Episcopal Church of England had been conspicuously more successful in maintaining internal discipline than the Presbyterian Church of Scotland? May it not be fairly urged that the great heresies of antiquity, the great dividing scandals of the Middle Ages, the intolerable development of the papal absolutism, are all

historic demonstrations of the failure of episcopacy? Or, at least, since the causes of Christian corruption and division have been so numerous and so strangely mingled, does not history emphatically disallow the notion (which seems implicit in the language of the *Appeal*) that the primary requisite for recovering and preserving external unity is the acceptance of the episcopal government? If, moreover, the question be reduced to the single issue of probability, might not the Roman Catholic urge with much force that the papal polity, which has replaced episcopacy over so vast an area, has, as things now stand in Christendom, a better prospect of winning universal acceptance than the episcopal? The Bishops, no doubt having in their view the current objections against Anglican episcopacy urged by Presbyterians and Congregationalists, are careful to state their "desire that the office of a Bishop should be everywhere exercised in a representative and constitutional manner," but their language remains ambiguous until it is made clear what constitution of the Church is accepted as truly normal. It is difficult to avoid the supposition that the "undivided Church" of the Roman Empire has provided the Bishops with their conception of the visible Church as an episcopal federation, and that the ideal which they perceive in the future

has been really drawn from the past. But if this be the case, are they not attempting an impossible achievement when they seek to recover from a long distant time institutions which have long been left behind in the movements of history? Even if the institution could be recovered, the ideas which they once expressed, and which made their efficient working possible, have perished beyond recovery.

Having thus postulated episcopacy as the indispensable polity of the united Church of the future, the *Appeal* indicates a method by which the non-episcopal Communion may become episcopal without loss of their spiritual self-respect or corporate existence. The proposal is thus stated:

“ We believe that for all, the truly equitable approach to union is by the way of mutual deference to one another’s consciences. To this end, we who send forth this appeal would say that if the authorities of other Communion should so desire, we are persuaded that, terms of union having been otherwise satisfactorily adjusted, Bishops and clergy of our Communion would willingly accept from these authorities a form of commission or recognition which would commend our ministry to their congregations, as having its place in the one family life. It is not in our power to know how far this suggestion may be acceptable to those to whom we offer it. We can only say that we offer it in all sincerity as a token of our longing that all ministries of



grace, theirs and ours, shall be available for the service of our Lord in a united Church.

“It is our hope that the same motive would lead ministers who have not received it to accept a commission through episcopal ordination, as obtaining for them a ministry throughout the whole fellowship.

“In so acting no one of us could possibly be taken to repudiate his past ministry. God forbid that any man should repudiate a past experience rich in spiritual blessings for himself and others. Nor would any of us be dishonouring the Holy Spirit of God, Whose call led us all to our several ministries, and Whose power enabled us to perform them. We shall be publicly and formally seeking additional recognition of a new call to wider service in a reunited Church, and imploring for ourselves God’s grace and strength to fulfil the same.”

The sincerity and good intention of this proposal are apparent, but it is difficult to imagine that it can have much effect. It lies open to two objections, which are not capable of being removed. On the one hand, it is conceived in terms of frank reciprocity, but it is not really reciprocal. For the conditions of such reciprocity do not exist. No non-episcopal Church denies the validity of episcopal ordinations, none objects to episcopally ordained clergymen as such, none has any “form of commission or recognition” which it desires to insist upon as supplementing or completing episcopal ordination. Therefore the proposal that, in return for the acceptance by non-episcopalians of “a commission through

episcopal ordination," Anglican Bishops and clergy would accept something analogous from non-episcopalians, falls to the ground because non-episcopalians have nothing analogous to offer. On the other hand, the old rock of offence reappears, since the full spiritual validity of non-episcopal ordinations is not conceded. A validity is conceded, but it is limited to the denomination and guaranteed by the minister's personal experience. It is not, and must not be, recognized "throughout the whole fellowship." Thus, in spite of the noble spirit of the *Appeal* and its impressive eloquence, it does not carry the project of Reunion beyond the point at which it has always hitherto failed. The unique spiritual authority of the episcopal government is still insisted upon.

A student of Christian history may well wonder at the decisive importance which the Anglican Bishops have again attached to the episcopal government. For the historic schisms of Christianity have rarely been determined by that issue. East and West were divided on a point of abstruse theological speculation. Roman Catholic and Protestant are opposed for reasons among which the claims of the Papacy are, perhaps, not the most considerable. Lutherans and Calvinists came into conflict on sacramental theories. Calvinist and Arminian fought

over high matters of theology. The differences between the Nonconformist bodies have had comparatively little reference to organization. The four great types of ecclesiastical polity—Papal, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational—are more closely connected with secular politics than with religious convictions. Always the nominal causes of schism had but slight relation to the governing factors. It is surely irrational and practically unfortunate to give primary place to what is essentially a secondary factor in Christianity.

In view of the difficulties, moral and intellectual, which attach to Christianity in modern society, and which are inspiring “modernist” movements in every Church, it becomes gravely important that the conditions under which episcopacy is accepted should be frankly stated and fully understood. There is a danger, which the recent history of the Church of England shows to be neither trivial nor remote, that episcopacy, commended and received on grounds of history and convenience, may tend to bring back the notions and practices with which historically it has been associated. The attempt to reintroduce the ancient method of authority in dealing with intellectual issues which challenge the doctrinal tradition of the Church will always commend itself to some minds. These methods

seem most legitimate when adopted by a government which claims Apostolical descent and possesses the prestige of immemorial antiquity. But the precedents of the "undivided Church" of the Roman Empire are more likely to mislead than to assist the authorities of the modern Church. Truth is a higher thing even than unity. Of all the services which the Reformation rendered to the modern world none was so great as its definite preference of truth to unity. Anything which definitely severed the Anglican Church from the fellowship of the Reformed Churches, would have lamentable consequences, not merely on Anglicanism but on Christianity as a whole. That there is a real danger of this severance cannot be denied by anyone who knows the strength and direction of tendencies within the Anglican Communion.

Two interpretations of Anglican Christianity are before the world and pressing for acceptance. The one represents the Reformation as a lamentable irrelevance, injected disastrously into the ecclesiastical system of Western Christendom three and a half centuries ago, and claims that Anglicanism is essentially a version of the older type of Catholic Christianity, having its true affinity with the unreformed Churches. The other accepts the Reformation as a critical phase in the development of Christ's religion, and



regards Anglicanism as properly continuous therefrom, a true expression in the twentieth century of the spiritual principles which emerged in the sixteenth, a version therefore of the Protestant religion, having its true affinity with the Reformed Churches. I have made it sufficiently clear that the latter interpretation appears to me to be required by the Anglican formularies, and to be alone congruous with the history of Anglicanism. I think also that only as a version of the Protestant religion has Anglicanism any *raison d'être* or any spiritual future. For this reason, among others, I rejoice greatly at the improvement of relations between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden, to which I owe the honour of being invited to give the lectures which I have now completed, and which the pronouncements of the Lambeth Conference will, I trust, tend to advance. For the Church of Sweden is unquestionably a Protestant Church though possessed of an episcopal government. Through intercommunion with that Church it is not chimerical to hope that the Church of England may recover touch with Continental Protestantism as a whole, and thus take up again a tradition, the interruption of which has been mischievous both in England and in Europe.

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